Doris Humphrey Answers the Critics

Dance and Dancers

MARCH 1959

This month's full ballet guide

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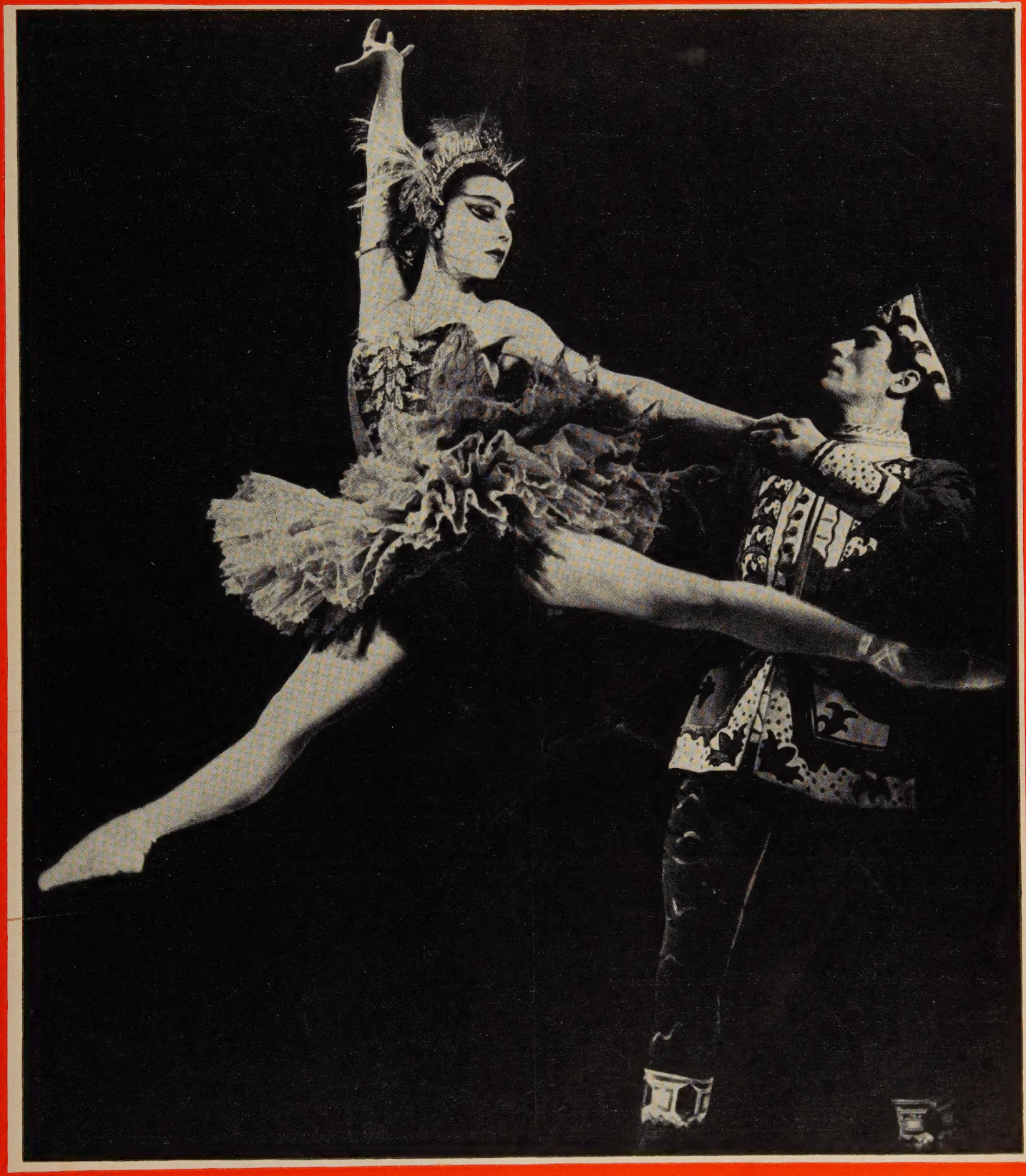

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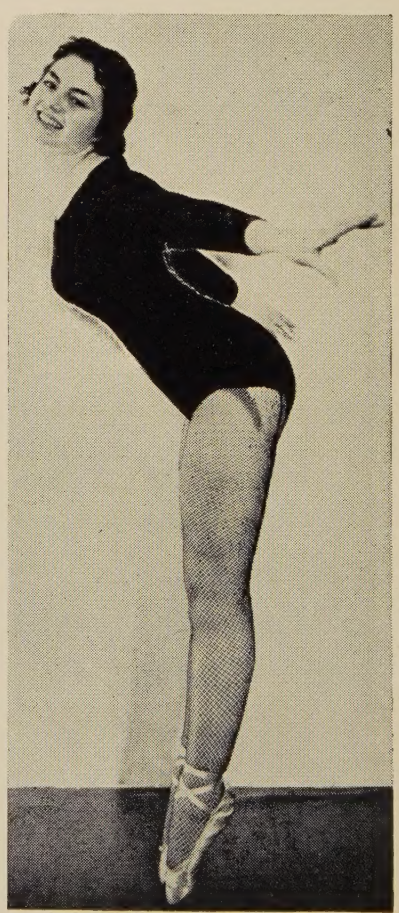

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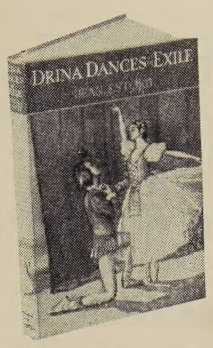

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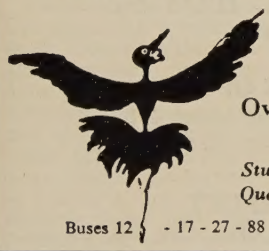

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Personality of the Month

Margot Fonteyn discussing details of a scene in her first feature film with the director, Dr. Paul Czinner. Photo : John Behr.

PAUL CZINNER

DR. PAUL CZINNER — according to a publicity handout — was given a violin at the age of four, and taught himself to play it! You may be moderately sceptical about this, but even if it is not strictly accurate it gives more than a hint of the man who a few years ago descended upon the Bolshoi Ballet armed with four cameras and a team of cameramen, and in a comparatively few hours turned out a feature film that set the box office turnstiles clicking on both sides of the Atlantic.

Czinner was born in Vienna, and his film career began in Germany with a series of films featuring such stars as Emile Jannings, Conrad Veidt and his discovery, Elizabeth Bergner, which, quite typically, he wrote, produced and directed. After making films in Paris and London, and working for a time in the American theatre, he decided to combine his interests in the film and in the theatre by devising some method by which the film could act as a record of great stage performances and productions. One of his earliest experiments along this line was of opera at Salzburg, and then in 1956 came his great success with the Bolshoi Ballet film, and he received the backing of the Rank Organisation, who are now sponsoring his future ventures.

For the Bolshoi film he used four strategically-placed cameras, and by cutting one to another and by moderate use of close-up he devised a system that was in part intended to reproduce that mixture of meandering and concentration undertaken by the human eye during an actual performance. By clever editing he produced the dance highlights and tried to keep his chosen picture on the ballet's visual focus of attention. The theory is that where the eye looks, there is Dr. Czinner's picture.

Now for the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden, Czinner has developed and enlarged the technique he used for the Bolshoi film. He has used eleven cameras instead of four, each camera having four variable positions. He placed them in the stalls, boxes and gallery at Covent Garden, giving himself a total of forty-four different angles.

The film has now been shot. Czinner's army has been, camped and departed — and the Royal Ballet is now immortalised in eleven spools somewhere in Rankdom. From these shots will emerge the film, which if successful will give the first important record of the Royal Ballet today, and its two leading dancers, Fonteyn and Somes. A few years ago there was a moderately heated argument as to how Karsavina danced in *The Firebird*. If in forty years time there is no similar argument on how Fonteyn danced the same rôle, we shall have Dr. Czinner to thank.

March 1959 10th YEAR OF PUBLICATION Vol. 10 No. 3

Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS *Associate Editor:* CLIVE BARNES
Assistant Editor : E. C. MASON
WORLD'S LARGEST SALE IN THE FIELD

JUST ONCE FOR ALL TIME

IT may just be coincidence or it may be that an editorial of some time past started a little germ working. But we did once implore film makers to get down to the job of recording some of the great artists and ballets of our time so that future generations would get at least an idea as to how they were danced and performed. At last there is a great stirring of ballet in celluloid and a number of enlightened people are getting down to the job. Ballet films have been the main topic of conversation over the past few weeks not only on account of the sabbatical activities around Bow Street where Paul Czinner has been filming the Royal Ballet and Margot Fonteyn in some of her rôles, but in other places too.

On a doleful February evening, an invited audience was bidden to the French Institute to see a film which mainly consisted of some colour films of the earlier works of Maurice Béjart. Though these will be reviewed in full next month, I can say here that as regards filming the dance they unquestionably captured the essentials of the dance far better than any previous film has managed to. Not only do they give a comprehensive representation of the ballet as a whole, without any of those so clever shots which turn most ballet films into a farce, but the camera is used intelligently so as to heighten some effects that are often missed by the audience in the theatre. This Ciné Ballet de Paris, shown to a British audience before any other, is definitely a big step forward in filming the dance.

On an equally dour morning, shortly before that, a number of people met at the Film Institute to discuss the possibilities of collecting all the existing films of dance and also of the making of new ones in order to set down for all time the dance artists of our time and what they dance. Not long before that, Frederick Ashton, in a radio programme, declared that he found films — even cheaply made ones — the must useful aid to ballet revivals.

In America a great number of ballets and dance works are being filmed, so it seems that all across the globe there are many people fully aware of the film's importance as a means of recording and, incidentally, as something to provide for your entertainment as well.

I have the very greatest admiration for the forms of notation being brought into use, and most admirable they are for providing a record of choreography, but what no form of notation has yet achieved is a way of perpetuating interpretation and showing just *how* the ballets were danced. Science having reached the pitch that it has, it is still only the film that can do just that. This sudden awareness is most gratifying and everything possible should be done to encourage a visual record of what many people declare to be the Golden Age of Ballet.

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New Year comes to Monte Carlo — The Vienna State Opera Ballet on the Mediterranean — Stars of the Paris Opéra and the Royal Ballet combine with the Maurice Bejart company for Ballets de Noël — A problem for the Monte Carlo Theatre.

by PETER WILLIAMS

Photographed by SERGE LIDO

MONTE CARLO TRADE-MARK: The reproduction on left is the design which is always used as the cover to the programmes in the Théâtre de Monte Carlo. It is a charming conception which appears to have been inspired by Berain and the designers of the 18th century.

MONTE CARLO welcomed in 1959, one minute and thirty-five seconds late. While other places along the Riviera were ringing bells, sounding hooters and sirens and firing guns, the crowd outside the Hôtel de Paris and the International Sporting Club waited. Some time before, the enormous cars with monstrous fin-like rumps had been removed from around the Camembert, that circular piece of garden before the Casino whose grass arrives by the yard in bundles of gargantuan Swiss rolls and whose flowers are sunk in pots and whose only permanent feature are its giant palm trees which make a noisy crepuscular resting place for thousands of birds. All of a sudden the two aforementioned buildings became twin waterfalls of fire, the crowd cheered, birds left the palm trees in squeaking disorder, and 1959 walked into Monte Carlo. Walked in in the shape of a very old lady dressed in white and glittering with diamonds, though she may of course been the old year walking out, who was suddenly revealed in the cruel and harsh light of the fiery cascades, doubtless tottering on her pin-point heels from one gambling place to another.

Somehow she seemed to be symbolic of a certain aspect of Monte Carlo, an aspect of which I shall have more to say later. Because in spite of the elegance of this the world's first gambling principality, there is a hard core beneath the surface glitter that is what makes Monte Carlo what it is and what at the same time stops it from becoming what it could become.

Like the new year, I too was late. So late that unfortunately I missed the season of Janine Charrat's company. For this I was sorry because I have a great admiration for the work of Charrat and particularly as her short season over the Christmas days included a revival of one of the most intelligent and moving of post-war creations — *Les Algues*. I was told that she had reconstructed it, that it was shorter and more tightly-knit this story, based on truth, of Georges-Emile Guérin, who enters a lunatic asylum so as to be near his beloved Cotherine. Its creator, Louis-Bertrand Castelli, did in fact spend some time in an asylum so as to get insight into the world of fantasy which surrounds the unfortunate inmates. Judging by all reports, the work has lost none of its power while Charrat was

LES ALGUES: *Janine Charrat, as Catherine, and Milorad Miskovitch, as Georges Emile Guérin, surrounded by inmates of the asylum in Charrat's powerful work which was revived in Monte Carlo.*

PARLIC'S VERSION OF BIZET: The final group from the Vienna State Opera Ballet's production of Symphony in C. *In the centre group, Edeltraut Brexner is being held aloft by Richard Adama, with Willy Dirtl to their right.*

even better than before in the rôle of Catherine and Miskovitch gave a remarkable interpretation of Guérin, the rôle originally created by Peter Van Dijk. This is a work of importance which should not be allowed to slip forgotten out of the contemporary repertory.

VIENNA STATE OPERA BALLET

SYMPHONY IN C: *Ballet by Dimitri Parlic. Music by Georges Bizet. Designed by Dusan Ristic. Choreography by Dimitri Parlic.*

MEDUSE: *Ballet in three acts by Gale M. Hoffman. Music by Gottfried Von Einem. Designed by Georges Wakhewitch. Production and choreography by Erika Hanka.*

HOTEL SACHER: *Ballet by Erika Hanka. Music by Josef Hellmesberger and Max Schonherr. Designed by Rudolf Stehlik and Georges Wakhewitch. Production and choreography by Erika Hanka.*

WHAT I did arrive in time for was the first visit to France of the Vienna State Opera Ballet. This company came to the Nervi Festival last year and at that time I wrote about it at some length (*Dance and Dancers,* September, 1958). But the cruel light of Monte Carlo which revealed the ravaged features of the old lady of the fireworks also showed-up some features of the Vienna ballet which the soft summer atmosphere of the Ligurian nights, plus the distance from auditorium to stage, had hidden with true Italian tact. The close proximity of audience and dancer in Monte Carlo and the fact that an abstract ballet reveals physical faults like in a goldfish bowl, made their opening ballet — Dimitri Parlic's version of Bizet's *Symphony in C* — an unfortunate choice.

Having seen most of the ladies and gentlemen only in character parts previously, I was a little stunned by the evidence of rich Viennese living. It would appear that most of them exist on coffee rich with cream and luscious Viennese pastry. Of course in Vienna it is possible that such well-rounded limbs are *de rigeur*; unfortunately in other countries we consider that avoirdupois tends to fuzz-up any beauty of line.

I often wonder why, when a great choreographer like Balanchine turns a symphony into a successful choreographic study, others should think that they can do better? It is true, of course, that our Andrée Howard was the first to make a ballet, *Assembly Ball,* out of Bizet's only symphony. This was followed by Balanchine's realisation of the same work in his *Palais de Cristal* for the Paris Opéra. There, one would have thought, the matter would end, though no harm was done when Balanchine re-mounted his own work, minus scenery, for his American New York City Ballet and, in fact, as *Symphony in C* it has triumphantly blazoned its way across the globe. However, several other people have become attracted to this symphony mainly because it is ideal ballet music, provides contrasting moods, but is overall a lively and tuneful composition. But though several people have had a shot at making something of it, nobody has brought to it what Howard and Balanchine achieved. Dimitri Parlic, of Yugoslavia, and recently appointed ballet master to the Vienna State Opera ballet, made a start of his tour with the company by mounting yet another re-working of this popular symphony.

Possibly taking the company's existing repertory into consideration, this work has its place as symphonic works of this kind are always useful for programme-building and they instil a sense of discipline into a company more used to dramatic works. Yet I question the advisability of exporting the result, because it made not the happiest introduction to an audience seeing the company for the first time. After the first shock of the excessive flesh of the dancers and the discrepencies of size, lengthways as well as sideways, of the *corps,* the choreography seemed rather second-rate. It is possible that in Vienna when given by the whole company (only half the company came to Monte Carlo) the ballet achieves some impact from its mass onslaught, but the

ALLEGRO VIVO: Richard Adama and Edeltraut Brexner in the first movement of Parlic's version of Bizet's Symphony in C.

MEDUSA : Christl Zimmerl in the title rôle of Erika Hanka's ballet based on the Greek myth.

cruel light and the close proximity of Monte Carlo did its work well, and mercilessly stripped away all the kindly veils which hide so many faults in larger theatres where public and performer are separated by the vast chasm of an orchestra pit. Parlic would seem to be a disciple of the Lifar neo-classic school and he has inherited many of its faults, the principal one being that clever-clever movements are superimposed upon the composer's ordered measure. While not ignoring the composer's beat, he decidedly ignores the composer's intentions and the deeper content of the music. After all, Bizet constructed his symphony on classic lines, and in this respect Balanchine has proved his respect for the composer by never overstepping in movement what Bizet implied. Parlic has gone all out to proclaim that he, and he alone, is the ballet's onlie begetter and that the music is but a mere accompaniment — frankly any symphony would have served his purpose equally well. But this seems to me to destroy the prime purpose of any transmutation of a symphonic construction into movement.

When Lifar commits these crimes in the theatre he is usually supported by superb dancers ; the crime, if crime it be, is therefore often ignored in the beauty of its execution. Parlic has not been so lucky because now the work is given with a lack of style by almost everyone with the exception of Christl Zimmerl in the *Adagio* movement. Above all, there was a horrifying exaggeration of expression — toothy smiles and coyness — from most of the dancers. Nothing was helped by the costumes of Duson Ristic — poorly executed tutus for the girls and half-brown, half-white tunics for the boys which did not seem to fit anywhere. The girls were crowned with feathery artichokes which gave them a very hard appearance. Altogether it would seem that such exhibitions are more suited to home consumption.

The programmes given in Nervi last year were mainly devoted to the works of Erika Hanka, a choreographer to whom Vienna ballet owes much and who died last summer. With one notable exception, the works then shown were not of the highest choreographic standard, but the first of her ballets shown during the Monte Carlo season, *Meduse,* was new to me. It concerned the life and death of that snaky-locked Gorgon lady — Medusa — upon whom to look was to be turned into a mere pebble. After an encounter with a blind sailor (Richard Adama) who is infatuated, and safe owing to his blindness, until he happens to touch her hair, Medusa (Christl Zimmerl) meets death at the hand of Perseus.

This is actually a very good story for a ballet, and some of Hanka's choreography is apt and telling. So clear is it, in fact, that it hardly seemed necessary for the long, flowery and ponderous programme explanation. I also like the score of Gottfried Von Einem, the forty-year-old Austrian composer who was responsible for several operas including *Danton's Death* and Kafka's *The Trial.* It is one of those powerful and dramatic scores which is less heavy and more subtle than most scores of this kind from Central European countries.

As the Blind Sailor, Richard Adama had a difficult rôle. It is not easy to imply blindness in ballet because the moment you look at your partner the interpretation becomes null and void. On the other hand it is not necessary to over-act to a point that the character becomes one of farce. But here again it is possibly excusable as I could not feel that Adama had got the measure of the theatre — his interpretation may be most effective in Vienna. The Perseus of Karl Musil was heroic and simple. He is a fine artist, tall and with an elegant line, who should be used more in the repertory. He needs to be polished in the studios of Paris or London but he provides admirable raw material which should one day turn him into an important dancer.

The work was dominated, as indeed it should be, by the Medusa of Christl Zimmerl. Physically she has all the qualities of a ballerina — large eyes, good bone structure in her face, a long neck and a very nice line. Although she has a good technique, I would say that at the moment she is not capable of sustaining a long rôle, though here I may be wrong, not having yet seen enough of her work. I find her a compelling stage personality, and of all the ballerinas in the company has the qualities we look for in such a person. Moreover, she does not appear to have been affected by Viennese pastries if, in fact, she ever touches them. In this case she was hampered by a headdress which was overloaded with snakes and spoilt the line of the back of her head. But she gave a performance that had all the cruel and seductive quality of the mythical and dangerous charmer.

Wakhewitch's setting was heavy and unimaginative, and although I am sure that his setting looks better on a larger stage it could never be other than pretty pedestrian. A subject such as this could well be treated with more imagination than a blue cyclorama and a collection of rock pieces. Such a story would have been ideal for a Henry Moore, a Barbara Hepworth or a Nicholas Georgiadis.

The final work on the first programme was Hanka's last creation, *Hôtel Sacher.* It has been considerably shortened since I wrote about it at Nervi in the last September *Dance and Dancers,* and this may have been brought about by something that I said, nevertheless it remains a remarkably undistinguished work. Though it must be said in all fairness that it makes a jolly and uncomplicated finishing ballet which was obviously much to the taste of the over-seventies in the Monte Carlo audience who clattered their diamond rings together in delight. In Nervi the corny proceedings in Frau Sacher's hotel were enlivened by a display of real fireworks which fire regulations in Monte Carlo would obviously not allow. But if we have to have ballets of the whipped cream school let us have real cream and not ersatz. The company, who overplayed lamentably on the first performance, had got the measure of the theatre by the second and third.

The other two programmes were similar to the above except that in one, the *Miraculous Mandarin* was substituted for *Meduse* and in another *Othello* formed the other half of a programme with *Hôtel Sacher.* Both these works by Erika Hanka were reviewed in full in the August 1958 number and there seems little to add except that I still found *The Miraculous Mandarin* an extremely powerful work in which Dietlinde Klemisch gives an excellent portrayal of the prostitute whose love for a Mandarin causes his eventual death. In the title rôles of this and in *Othello,* Willy Dirtl proves that he is a great master of characterisation ; so much so that I would think him well advised to forego his appearances in more classical parts for which his physique is entirely wrong.

By cutting out some rather hysterical chorus interludes, *Othello* has been greatly improved and the drama between Othello, Desdemona (Christl Zimmerl) and Iago (Richard Adama) is more closely knit than before and these three finely conceived performances are thrown into greater focus. It is obviously in these dramatic works that the Vienna company excels and they would be well advised to confine their programmes to such ballets when they next make a sortie out of their native country.

MONTE CARLO CABARET

EACH evening after the final curtain has rung down in the theatre, there is still more dancing to be seen in Monte Carlo. True it is served up as a luscious accompaniment to supper in the cabaret in the bowels of the Casino, but it is dancing none the less. After all, the first ballet at Tortona in 1489 was an accompaniment to a feast,

so there is nothing particularly sacriligious about such dancing today even if it is not connected with quite such elaborate fare.

Cabaret has been a feature of Monte Carlo life since the 'twenties, and it has known many vicissitudes. In the last five years it has started on the up-grade again owing to the presence of that notable designer, André Levasseur. Even if the dances were not always imaginative, the costumes were possibly the most gorgeous to be seen in any similar entertainment anywhere in the world today. Last Spring, Arthur Plasschaert, a young Dutch dancer and choreographer, became responsible for the choreography and has proved himself admirably fitted for the job. It is rather a specialised form of choreography that he has to do for he has to make dancers of showgirls and showgirls of dancers. Feminine pulchritude is naturally the first consideration — but they also have to trip a measure or two and convince the world that they are dancers — even if, in fact, they are not. This naturally leads to certain limitations in the *enchaînements* they can be given. Plasschaert now seems to have discovered the right formula and this was particularly noticeable in his recent creation, *Banco,* for the New Year gala. While he himself and two other boys took the part of gamblers, the girls were playing-card characters — the more dancing ones being the lower pips on the cards and the *figurante* girls being Court cards. Against a baize green backcloth and floor-cloth, their wonderful costumes — mainly in red, white, green and black — were highly effective. The whole idea was simple and so were the steps, but it was a theatrical piece of production eminently suitable to the gambling principality. The principal dancer there now is a coffee-coloured dynamo called Jamie Bauer, who used at one time to be in Roland Petit's company. In all the various items I saw on different nights, she proved to be a great asset to the proceedings — her speed and vibrant body galvanised the other dancers into as near a frenzy as is possible on the lethargic Côte d'Azur.

During the Monte Carlo off season, this group has taken to touring, and they recently had a highly successful season in Madrid. It would be a good idea if they turned their eyes towards London, because our cabarets badly need a bit of fresh air and the gorgeous girls and costumes of Levasseur would be a tonic to us all.

BALLETS DE NOËL

First Programme

PULCINELLA : *Choreography by Maurice Béjart. Music by Vivaldi. Designed by Bernard Daydé.*

PAVANE POUR UNE INFANTE DEFUNTE : *Music by Ravel. Choreography by Jean Combes. Designed by Jacques Rapp.*

ONDINE (Pas de Deux) : *Music by Hans Werner Henze. Choreography by Frederick Ashton. Costumes by Lila de Nobili. Décor by André Levasseur.*

ANNABEL LEE : *Music by Byron Schiffman. Choreography by George Skibine.*

LA SYMPHONIE POUR UN HOMME-SEUL : *Choreography by Maurice Béjart. Musique Concrète by Pierre Henry and Pierre Schaeffer.*

VIOLETTA (Pas de Deux) : *Choreography by Maurice Béjart. Music by Verdi.*

ETUDES RYTHMIQUES : *Production and choreography by Maurice Béjart.*

LIKE me and the New Year, the Ballets de Noël also arrived rather late. In fact, the opening programme was given on January 3. However. it was far better to have this salad of famous ballerinas and France's *avant garde* dance company late than not at all. The incredibly long programme opened with Béjart's *Pulcinella,* which was first given about 18 months ago with Béjart choreography, the original Stravinsky/Pergolesi music created for the Diaghilev company, and more or less the same story that Massine used. Since then there have been complications over the use of Stravinsky's score, so the story has been changed completely and the work is danced to Vivaldi's *Quattro Stagioni.*

The story is one of those typical Neapolitan romps about Commedia dell'Arte characters and amorous nobles, intrigues and deceptions and which end in general gaiety. Frankly it is too complicated to record and nobody would be much wiser if I did, but this does not mean that it was not highly enjoyable and it opened the programme on a lively and charming note.

What impressed me most was the way in which Béjart has obviously soaked himself in the spirit of the Italian comedy. He managed to capture the essence of the Neapolitan character and his movements were inspired by the Callot drawings, which are by far the best record of Commedia dell'Arte attitudes of the 18th century. He

BANCO : *Two scenes from the highly successful cabaret number created in the International Sporting Club on New Year's Eve devised by Arthur Plasschaert (kneeling centre in top picture). This work with beautiful costumes by André Levasseur was possibly one of the most apt of all these cabaret ballets to be given in Monte Carlo.*

PULCINELLA : *The full cast in the finale of Béjart's Commedia dell'Arte ballet to Vivaldi music. The picture shows Bernard Daydé's charming set.*

contrived to be delicate, bawdy and earthy all at the same time. His nobility had real elegance while his strolling players were rumbustuous and human. Béjart and Michèle Seigneuret, as Pulcinella and his son, were deliciously etched characters and might have been every Callot engraving you ever thought of, while the whole company convincingly entered into the spirit of it all.

I particularly liked Daydé's setting, which owed nothing to Picasso's original design. The houses and little theatre which flanked the stage were merely white sheets with holes cut out of them for doors and windows ; they were suspended against a brilliant blue sky like the lines of washing which are such a feature of the meaner streets of Naples. Apart from these for the Pulcinellos, authentically in white, the costumes were in clear bright colours and the whole presented a delightful stage picture which retained all the essential atmosphere of those early woodcuts of the Italian comedy.

The music of Vivaldi is, of course, enchanting, and each of the seasons had been used for a separate day in this four-day episode. On the other hand it seemed slightly too pretty and occasionally monotonous for such a robust theme. It is here that one can see what a masterstroke it was when Diaghilev imposed Stravinsky's arrangements on the Pergolesi themes, for by so doing he retained the delicacy of the 18th century atmosphere while giving the score a greater sense of drama and a slightly more earthy character of the streets. So much music of the 17th and 18th century seems to breathe the refined air of salons and drawing rooms, and it needs a genius like Stravinsky to bring it into a less blue-blooded environment.

Another fault in the use of the Vivaldi music is that it now dictates the length of the ballet, and there is no doubt but that work as a whole would benefit by about seven minutes being chopped out of it. But as far as the Béjart company is concerned it is an invaluable opening work and is entirely different in theme and mood to any other work in the repertory.

There have been innumerable versions of Ravel's moving little fragment, *Pavane pour un Infante Défunte*, which followed. In a very short space of time, Ravel has suggested the cloistered life of a Princess in the Spanish court and how she is held virtually prisoner by the watching eyes of duennas. Jean Combes, choreographer and ballet master from Strasbourg, has managed to suggest all this in his miniature work designed to show a new quality in Liane Daydé, *étoile* of the Paris Opéra. He introduces a suitor in the elegant form of Youly Algaroff and he and the Infanta promenade in a *Pavane* for a few moments, which is the only contact that the duennas allow — the Infanta then returns to her frame and death, never having known the ways of this wicked world. It was a slight but very right conception of Ravel's original plan though hardly a vehicle for a notable ballerina. Daydé had little to do other than remain perfectly still in a frame looking like one of Velasquez's Las Meninas, and this she did very well indeed. There was something infinitely touching about this tiny figure, imprisoned by her elaborate dress, completely static for what seemed a very long time, though it cannot have been for more than a few minutes. The art of conveying much while remaining stationary is one that can only be achieved by experienced ballerinas and this certainly showed a different facet of Daydé's qualities. Algaroff had little to do other than look noble, and there are few people in the business who can look more so. The four duennas fulfilled their purpose of impersonating prison bars.

Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes have become Monte Carlo habitués who are always sure of a welcome on the Côte d'Azur. Without the frame of a company it

COMEDIANS IN NAPLES : Two scenes from Pulcinella. *On the left is a group of characters including Pulcinella (Béjart) and his son (Seigneuret). On the right these two characters are seen performing in their itinerant theatre.*

STARS OFF STAGE: Left, Margot Fonteyn and Michael Somes talking to Maurice Béjart during a rehearsal of Pulcinella. *Right, Somes and Fonteyn with the two Paris Opéra stars, Youly Algaroff and Liane Daydé during the dress rehearsal of* Pavane pour une Infante Défunte.

becomes increasingly difficult to present them in the manner to which they are accustomed as few British dancers, with the exception of Markova and Nerina, have a concert repertoire of *soli* and dances for two people. Their choice of the *pas de deux* from the second scene in the first act of *Ondine,* which came next in the programme, was not inapt. On the other hand it is the sort of *pas de deux* which Ashton has so carefully dovetailed into his complete ballet that when raped from its context appeared to be without beginning or end — dramatically this becomes a fault. André Levasseur created an undetermined décor of rocks and trees to give atmosphere, which was a welcome change from the black tabs which so frequently form the background for these isolated *pas de deux.*

But what a beautiful conception this is! And how exquisitely the spirit of water has been realised in Fonteyn's movements. Even in this digest form she still managed to convey the immortal sprite who falls in love with a mortal, and Somes makes the sort of mortal which one can well imagine might turn the head — the heart being non-existent — of this strange and fascinating creature. Ashton in a masterly way has achieved choreography that is never out of place or spectacular but in which every little movement tells its own tale. When I think of the plethora of *pirouettes* which would occur in the work of French choreographers trying to imply a similar love passage. or the superabundance of *jetés, arabesques* and lifts that would be used by the Russians, I marvel at the self-effacement of Ashton's work and the true poetry of his movement. Poetry it undoubtedly has and is as fervent an expression of love as a sonnet by Shakespeare. Beautifully danced and lovely as it was, I doubt if an audience not having seen the complete ballet could realise that it was, in fact, an extension of what had gone before and but a tiny segment cut from the full circle of a ballet which is actually little more than an extenuated love passage.

Another passage of hopeless love was the main theme of *Annabel Lee* which followed. Originally created by Skibine for himself and his wife, Marjorie Tallchief, this work loses a great deal when not given by its two creators. This sad little poem of the death of two lovers by the sea was written by Edgar Allan Poe on the death of his wife. It is a poignant little work which has been admirably set to music in the form of a traditional English folk song by Byron Schiffman. Daydé and Algaroff, showing a great deal more animation than in their previous number, gave it well, and Daydé looked childish and helpless. Algaroff played convincingly but needed more technical virtuosity to lift it out of the rather commonplace. It would seem that Skibine is like Massine in that nobody else is ever able to bring the essential style to the rôles which they create for themselves. A monochrome setting by an anonymous designer, rather in the school of Bernard Buffet, suggested a busy harbour rather than the open sea shore — it is doubtful whether the sea would ever be able to claim anyone with so many ships around.

After this stellar filling to the sandwich flanked by Béjart's company, the programme continued with the famous *La Symphonie pour un Homme Seul.* As I said when writing about this Béjart work in the December issue, it has dated a bit. It is not that this first theatre piece to *concrète* music is any less effective than when it was originally given but that so much of what Béjart has done later is better. However, it went over surprisingly well with the Monte Carlo audience. But I find it hard to know what prompted Béjart to create the *Violetta Pas de deux* which followed. Danced to excerpts from *La Traviata,* it was given with no particular grace or style by Janine Monin and Germinal Casado. It was a classical *pas de deux Manqué,* which might have been less lacking had it not followed so closely upon the heels of the distinguished dancing in *pas de deux* for famous French and British ballerinas. The only contribution made by this end-of-term display to the programme as a whole was to add to its excessive length.

By this time most audiences in most parts of the world would have escaped from the theatre feeling that they had had enough, however good the feast might have been, and frankly I had my fears that Béjart's *Etudes Rythmiques* would fall flat and cause intellectual flatulence. However, this study in the development of rhythms, also reviewed in December, brought the marathon to a happy conclusion. Its simple structure, touches of humour and eventual vitality do not tax the brain and make an invigorating spectacle with the elevation and personality of Patrick Belda carrying away most of the honours.

BALLETS DE NOËL

Second Programme

L'ETRANGER : *Choreography by Maurice Béjart. Music by Villa Lobos. Designed by Bernard Daydé.*

JULIETTE : *Choreography and production by Maurice Béjart. Designed by Pierre Clayette. Music from various sources.*

HAUT-VOLTAGE : *Book by Pierre Rhallys. Music by Marius Constant. Choreography by Maurice Béjart. Designed by Abel Rilliard.*

THE offerings from the stars of the Paris Opéra and the Royal Ballet, forming centre part of the programme, remained the same throughout the season. The ballets from Béjart's company changed and were new to Monte Carlo, though certainly not new to the readers of *Dance and Dancers.* It was sad that the rôle of the Stranger in *L'Etranger* could not be played by Antonio

Cano as he had to give it up at the last moment owing to illness; Béjart himself took over the part at short notice. He danced it well but there was no escaping the fact that the work lost a great deal of its mysterious quality. It was originally created for Cano and the work was built around his height, his handsome Spanish features and his ability to perform his native dance steps. In a sort of way he achieved an abstract figure which could be hope, a symbol of freedom or all the desires or even a god image; Béjart's interpretation was all man, all flesh and bone. With the result that the work descends to the level of a new man entering the emotional kingdom of a woman whose desires are not completely fulfilled. In a way it points to the danger of creating a work around the personality of one person, and yet many other notable ballets owe their eminence to the same thing — Nijinsky in Fokine's *Le Spectre de la Rose* and Babilée in the Cocteau/Petit *Le Jeune Homme et la Mort* immediately come to mind.

As the girl, weary of her surroundings, to whom the Stranger's mysterious presence opens up a new vista of life, Tania Bari looked too young to have encountered such tired emotions. Nicole Amigues, who I had always seen in this part previously, used to convey a most plausible portrait of tarnished life and world weariness.

Mysterious presences seem to be a definite feature of one side of Béjart's work because the girl who gives the title to his *Juliette,* first created for the Devon Festival at Barnstaple last year, is just another of these creatures. Who is she? Where does she come from? Is she mortal or the figment of imagination? These are the question one is left with at the end of each of these works. *Juliette* has been tightened up since its first performance and now it flows like the psychopathic love passage that it is. A young man is haunted by the image of a girl who appears to him in a dance classroom, on the beach and in his lonely room. Believing that the family, the establishment, have killed her, he returns to meet her in the sea. It is a tender and haunting little love song and conceived with great feeling by Béjart. Its sombre progress is punctuated by moments of considerable humour — in the classroom where typical dance characters run the gamut of a morning class, and on the beach where sun worshippers pursue their amatory course. These and the more sinister moments, when Juliette's head appears vast and in duplicate and is broken up and also with the intrusion of the family, help to point the more lyrical moments of the love song.

Those who believe that Béjart's work is mainly concerned with violent theatrical impact and strange *concrète* noises must seriously consider that ballets such as this, *L'Etranger* and *Pulcinella* are a very important side to his creative genius.

When I first saw the work the two protagonists were played by Antonio Cano and Tania Bari; in Monte Carlo they were given by Janine Monin and Jean Blanchard. Both pairs, in their differing ways, were equally good. Monin is dark and beautiful and is technically more suited to works such as this rather than the demands of a neo-classic *pas de deux* such as the *Violetta* of the previous evening. Even if she lacked the enigmatic quality of Bari, she still managed to achieve a dead-pan strangeness. Blanchard, who many will remember for a number of smaller rôles well interpreted for Les Ballets des Champs-Elysées, is a more mundane young man than was Cano. In a way his was the more believable interpretation because if these strange manifestations appear to the type of person we can recognise it then becomes more remarkable than the same thing happening to an exotic character such as Cano cannot help being. It was more possible to identify Blanchard with his normal surroundings, and he gave the impression of the usual type of man, with a good and athletic physique, who any of us might meet in a classroom or on the beach.

The use of hurdy-gurdy music is charming and somehow strikes just the right note. My only regret is that the final scene has been bereft of its paper waves which were such an unusual and effective feature of the original production. Admittedly their absence gives more room for movement when the young man finally meets Juliette in the sea, but a certain atmosphere is lost.

About *Haut-Voltage,* the final work in the programme, I have written on several occasions, but never before have I heard it played by an orchestra. The orchestra, conducted by Daniel Stirn, did full justice to Marius Constant's frighteningly powerful score and the final shriek, when the Woman who holds the Power dies from an electric shock, is almost overpowering in its theatrical impact. But curiously enough, I found the overall effect less grand guignol than when the music was canned. Somehow the fact that the subject of the work, which is the illicit use of electrical power, needs electrically reproduced music — the fact that one can still associate the music with

Continued on page 27

PAVANE POUR UNE INFANTE DEFUNTE: *Daydé and Algaroff in Jean Combes' version of Ravel's ballet.*

JULIETTE: *Jean Blanchard rehearses Béjart's ballet with Janine Monin.*

Two Creations for New York City Ballet

In the February number of Dance and Dancers, **Arthur Todd reviewed the first two creations of New York City Ballet's Tenth Anniversary season which has been the company's most successful New York engagement and also shown the all-over excellence of the company as a whole. Here are the two most recent creations.**

Octet

First given by New York City Ballet at the City Center Theatre, New York, on December 3, 1958. Music by Igor Stravinsky. Choreography by William Christensen. Costumes by Lewis Brown. Lighting by David Hays.

BARBARA WALZAK and
EDWARD VILLELLA
ROBERTA LUBELL and
ROBERT LINDGREN
DIDO SAYERS and WILLIAM WESLOW
JUDITH GREEN and RICHARD RAPP

NOTE: Igor Stravinsky composed *Octet* in 1922-23 and he explains that sonority was not his first concern, but that composition, structure and form, in the line of the eighteenth-century masters, was foremost, with emphasis on clarity and melody.

THIS charming work for eight dancers is fresh, smart and delightful and is a ballet that needs eight first-rank dancers to invest it with proper humour, impudence and style. What it actually received in this performance by the company's younger soloists was engaging but lacked the polish and sophistication that might have been provided by more experienced dancers.

There is just a wisp of a dramatic line which is provided by the fact that a change of gloves — white, black and mixed colours — seem to provide nuances in mood and movement. Lewis Brown's black and white costumes were elegant and *chic* while Stravinsky's score, for a double quartet of woodwinds, proved melodic, vivacious and full of wit.

The choreographer, William Christensen, founded the San Francisco Ballet Company, for whom he staged a number of works. This is his first creation for the New York City Ballet and it is to be hoped that there will soon be more.

Arthur Todd.

Native Dancers

First given by New York City Ballet, at the City Center Theatre, on January 14, 1959. Choreography by George Balanchine. Music by Vittorio Rieti (Symphony No. 5). Girls costumes designed by Peter Larkin. Jockey silks by the H. Kauffman & Sons Saddlery Co. Scenery and lighting by David Hays.

Cast

PATRICIA WILDE
JACQUES D'AMBOISE
with

Bengt Anderson, Susan Borree, Anthony Blum, Janice Cohen, Diane Consoer, Carole Fields, Deni Lamont, Arthur Mitchell, Kenneth Petersen, Charlotte Ray, Dido Sayers, William Weslow.

FILLY AND JOCKEY: Patricia Wilde and Jacques d'Amboise in a pas de deux *from Balanchine's latest work,* Native Dancers, *which was inspired by a famous racehorse. Photo: Martha Swope.*

NOTE: Native Dancers is one of the greatest American racehorses. He was bred in 1950 by Polynesian out of Geisha. The big grey stallion was undefeated as a two-year-old and only defeated once, under exceptional circumstances, as a three-year-old, in the Kentucky Derby. He is now happily at stud at the Vanderbilt stables.

HORSES have provided the subject for a number of ballets in the past, and although this new work on that theme is by no means one of Balanchine's masterworks, it is fresh and gay and full of bounce. The skeletal setting, with a canopy overhead in the foreground and a race-track fence in the background, provides an ideal setting for this choreographic romp of jockeys in their racing silks and pony-tailed fillies.

There is a stunning section for Patricia Wilde and Jacques d'Amboise, whose highlight is a series of supported leaps through hoops. The dance action never becomes literal, though the two principals are served far better than the *corps de ballet,* and there is much here that is witty and inventive. Chiefly, however, this new work provides a dazzling setting for Patricia Wilde and she dances excitingly and

Arthur Todd.

ORIGINAL DESIGN: Eugene Berman's opening curtain for the first production of Stravinsky's Danses Concertantes, *with Balanchine choreography, for Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo in 1944.*

Ballet Perspectives: 10

Danses Concertantes

by CLIVE BARNES

IT would hardly be a Stravinsky ballet if its origins were not just a little misted over with doubt — and *Danses Concertantes* is first and foremost a ballet by Igor Stravinsky. The score was composed for the Janssen Symphony Orchestra, being performed for the first time at Los Angeles in February 1942. For some years it has been assumed that although it was originally performed as a concert piece, it had been written with the advice of George Balanchine, and had always been intended for the theatre.

BERMAN'S COSTUMES: Designs for some of the corps de ballet *in the original production. These particular costumes were mainly in pink, mauve and white with black designs. Others were in green, plum and yellow with black decoration.*

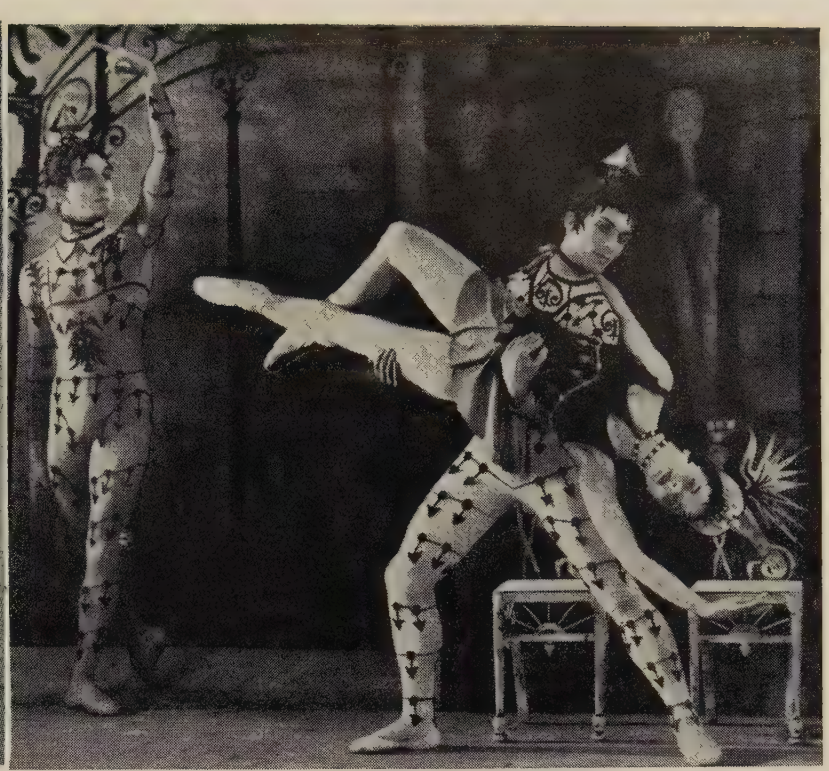
This is the view put by Arthur Berger (in the important symposium *Stravinsky in the Theatre)*, who says it was "heard first as a concert piece, though it had originally been conceived with Balanchine for the superb theatre work that is by now familiar". This view is supported by Balanchine himself in his *Complete Stories of the Great Ballets* (ed. Francis Mason). However, David Drew (*Decca Book of Ballet)* quotes a programme note, written by the composer himself and dated November 11, 1952, saying that "it was not conceived as a stage work". Nevertheless, whatever the rights of that particular argument, Balanchine seems to have had Stravinsky's full sanction when he choreographed the work for the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo.

When in 1944 Balanchine became associated with the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, he produced first a few revivals, and then on September 10, 1944, he presented his first new ballet, *Danses Concertantes.* The work's première took place, curiously enough, at the New York City Center, today the home of New York City Ballet and scene of so many of Balanchine's triumphs. The new ballet had décor and costumes by Eugene Berman, and its cast of 14 dancers was led by Alexandra Danilova and Leon Danielian, with Frederic Franklin later alternating in the leading male rôle.

Eugene Berman's décor, with its attractive baroque front-drop, and his beflounced costumes, received almost universal praise, and the ballet itself was exceptionally well received. This version of *Danses Concertantes* has never been seen in Europe, but Edwin Denby, writing in the *New York Herald Tribune* the day after the first performance, described it "as beautiful and elusive as the play of bright birds in a garden, birds fluttering, stalking, twittering and teasing one another; joyous birds that we watch in a summer of war-time". Despite the work's great success, Balanchine has never revived it for another company, although in the magazine *Ballet* (May 1950) it was announced that he had "offered to make a present of his *Danses Concertantes* to the junior company at Sadler's Wells, and to teach it to them this September". Nothing came of this, however, and the work he eventually created for the Theatre Ballet (was it a present, I wonder?) turned out to be *Trumpet Concerto.*

But destiny will go to endless trouble in encompassing its ends, and Stravinsky's score was eventually heard at Sadler's Wells something more than two year's later, although the choreography was not by Balanchine but by a young, and then almost unknown, Scottish choreographer, Kenneth MacMillan. MacMillan, born in Dunfermline in 1930, was one of the original members of the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. He had been a scholarship pupil to the Sadler's Wells School and — then unique among British choreographers — his entire training and career had been inside the Sadler's Wells Organisation. He left the Theatre Ballet in 1948 to join the company at Covent Garden, where he soon made a name for himself, dancing brilliantly in such parts as the *Giselle pas de deux* and making his début as the Blue Bird. However, he became dissatisfied with the opportunities open to him at Covent Garden and in 1952 asked to return to the Theatre Ballet, rejoin-

BALANCHINE VERSION: Leon Danielian and Alexandra Danilova in the original production.



MACMILLAN VERSION: David Poole, Donald Britton and Maryon Lane in the first British production for the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet.

ing it for the Edinburgh Festival that year.

During his second stay at the Theatre Ballet he had many rôles created for him, but he seemed reluctant to confine his career to dancing alone. Around this time he showed a certain interest in ballet designing, and under a pseudonym (Kenneth Adams) he designed ballets by Peter Darrell for both Ballet Workshop and London's Festival Ballet. His talents as a designer caught the attention of Sophie Fedorovitch, but it was soon to become evident that his real abilities lay in another direction.

At the end of 1952 David Poole, MacMillan and a few other dancers from Sadler's Wells and Covent Garden, organised the Sadler's Wells Choreographic Group which, with the assistance of Dame Ninette de Valois, gave Sunday performances of new ballets at the Sadler's Wells Theatre. At the first of these on February 1, 1952, MacMillan produced *Somnambulism,* using music by Stan Kenton and Pete Rugulo. This scored an instant and remarkable success, and MacMillan followed it in the next programme on June 14 with *Fragment,* a *pas de trois* also danced to Kenton music. Finally on January 14, 1954, MacMillan produced his first version of *Laiderette,* given to Frank Martin music and later adapted (July 4, 1955) and taken into the repertory of the Ballet Rambert.

At first it was thought that *Laiderette* would be produced for the Theatre Ballet, but for a variety of reasons this did not prove possible. Consequently MacMillan's first professional assignment was for BBC Television, producing a version of Richard Arnell's *Punch and the Child.* By this time MacMillan's début as a choreographer to the Sadler's Wells Organisation was only a matter of opportunity, and when the plans to reproduce *Laiderette* fell by the wayside, De Valois asked him to suggest another work he would like to do for the Theatre Ballet.

His original choice fell on *Le Baiser de la Fée.* De Valois agreed, and MacMillan began to immerse himself in the music, playing time and time again Stravinsky's own recording of the work. Unfortunately, copyright difficulties intervened and *Baiser* ceased to be a practicable proposition. However, by this time MacMillan had become fascinated by the piece on the reverse of this now deleted Stravinsky record — *Danses Concertantes.* He put this up as an alternative and it was accepted.

He drew his cast chiefly from dancers who had worked with him in the Choreographic Group performances; Maryon Lane and David Poole, who had danced in both *Somnambulism* and *Laiderette,* and Donald Britton, who had first shown his potentiality in MacMillan's dance style in *Fragment.*

The new ballet, in MacMillan's own words, "went like clockwork, and was only in rehearsal for about three weeks". He wanted a new designer for the ballet, and De Valois suggested that they go together to the Slade School. There he saw the work of several young designers, and finally settled on 27-year-old Greek-born Nicholas Georgiadis. Although Georgiadis had in 1952 designed a ballet for the Choreographers' Workshop in New York, *Danses Concertantes* was his first professional assignment.

The first performance of MacMillan's *Danses Concertantes* took place at the Sadler's Wells Theatre on January 18, 1955. The principal rôles were danced by Maryon Lane and David Poole; Donald Britton; Sara Neil, Annette Page and Gilbert Vernon; Donald MacLeary and Bryan Lawrence. The ballet was notably well received, a typical comment being Arnold Haskell's in *Ballet Annual No. 10,* who wrote: "MacMillan is without doubt a genuine choreographer and of a rare kind". The work was perhaps a little less successful, however, with audiences, particularly out of London, and the ballet faded from the repertory after the summer of 1956. It is now scheduled for revival by the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden, and should have its first performance there on March 13.

Writing of *Danses Concertantes* in *Stravinsky in the Theatre,* Balanchine said the score suggested "the Italian spirit of the *commedia dell'arte*". MacMillan told me that it was partly the "humorous and witty" quality in the music which attracted him to the score, and he also said it "suggested a kaleidoscope of ever-changing patterns". He detected a certain "circus quality which at times crept into the music" and it is worth noting that in one or two places in the score there are reminiscences of Stravinsky's *Circus Polka,* which was composed in the same year.

One of MacMillan's objects in this work was to make an attempt at creating "pure" dancing. Feeling that *Somnambulism,* and for that matter *Fragment* were essays in a jazz idiom, and that *Laiderette* was a narrative ballet, he wished to try his hand at simple neo-classical choreography, that told no story and had a firm basis in the *danse d'école.* (In fact, his motives were not altogether dissimilar from Michel Fokine's when he produced the second version of *Chopiniana.)*

Stravinsky's music is in five sections, with the Introductory March (Section 1) being repeated at the end (Section 5) with a brief *coda* tagged on. The second section is a *Pas d'Action,* which leads into four variations (Section 3) and a *Pas de Deux* (Section 4). The ballet is, of course, a *divertissement,* but the choreographic structure chosen by MacMillan seems to be somewhat more complex than that employed by Balanchine.

Apart from the opening and closing March, which Balanchine used for a kind of *defilé,* Balanchine's work included a general dance for ballerina, *premier danseur* and *corps de ballet,* followed by four contrasted *pas de trois* performed by the *corps,* and a clinching *pas de deux* for the two

(Continued on page 20)

Margot Fonteyn's Partner

(PART I)

by JOHN PERCIVAL

MICHAEL SOMES.
Portrait by Angus McBean.

ON the first day of this year, the name of Michael Somes suddenly became newsworthy. He had, indeed, figured often enough before then in the papers. Whenever Fonteyn's photograph appeared, poised on the steps of an aeroplane about to leave for Munich or Monaco or Melbourne, we saw over her shoulder Somes's fine head of dark hair and his attractive, slightly lopsided smile. But if the caption mentioned him at all it was likely to spell his name wrongly and call him "her partner, Michael Soames".

His appointment as C.B.E. in recognition of his invaluable work for our national ballet has changed all that, crystallising his reputation so that he is at last generally recognised as an important artist in his own right. But for the moment let us forget his work as a solo dancer. Let us forget even that he has danced in new works with May, Grey, Shearer, Elvin, Beriosova and Fifield, as well as escorting many dancers through the classics. Let us remember only that he is Margot Fonteyn's partner.

The important point in this context is that he is entirely worthy of Fonteyn. Not only that, but there is no other dancer at all who would now be so well suited to work with her as he is.

He is the right age: just slightly older than Fonteyn, so that they always look well together. Partly because of this, they both tend to appear younger on stage than they are. He has the right physique: tall, but not so much as to dwarf his partner; broad-shouldered and well proportioned. He has the right face, too: mature, noble, with firmly marked features, expressing both strength of character and kindliness of nature — in every way a perfect foil for Fonteyn's gentle, simple aristocracy.

In the style of their dancing, too, they are well matched. Both have spent their entire professional career with the Royal Ballet and their natural qualities have been developed in the same repertory, mainly in the classical ballets and those of Ashton. They learnt from the same people: both, for instance, came at an impressionable age under the stimulating, enlightening influence of Constant Lambert.

Lambert must have done much to strengthen and bring out the musical approach which Fonteyn and Somes alike bring to all their rôles. Somes's father and grandfather were musicians, and music is still one of his favourite forms of recreation. Consequently he is able, like Fonteyn, to adapt himself in any part to the demands of the music. I remember one performance of *Swan Lake,* under an unfamiliar conductor, in which the unexpected *tempi* led most of the dancers to a state of near disaster. Fonteyn and Somes almost alone were able to adapt themselves to the unaccustomed speeds and gave a particularly fine performance.

The way in which Somes, like Fonteyn, bases his approach to a new part on an understanding of the music may be seen by comparing their early performances with their subsequent appearances in the same parts. Each of them can be seen working steadily at their rôles, even after many years, to bring out new subtleties and refinements. Yet these are far more often dramatic than musical. Musically their performances are convincing from the first, but dramatically they will usually start off with only an outline of the rôle to be filled in later.

To this affinity of approach is added the advantage of Fonteyn and Somes having grown up together, watching and knowing each other's work since they were children. Fonteyn was 15 and just beginning to be noticed in the *corps de ballet* when the 17-year-old Somes, fresh from his West Country grammar school, arrived at the Wells School at the end of 1934 as their first scholarship pupil. Shortly afterwards he followed in Fonteyn's footsteps by making his début in *Casse Noisette.* In January 1938, just twenty-one years ago, they first danced together in a new ballet by Frederick Ashton. *Horoscope* gave Somes his first important success, confirming the good impression he had made leading the *pas de huit* in *Les Patineurs* a year before. *Horoscope* also foreshadowed the many later ballets in which Fonteyn and Somes were to be seen as innocent young lovers.

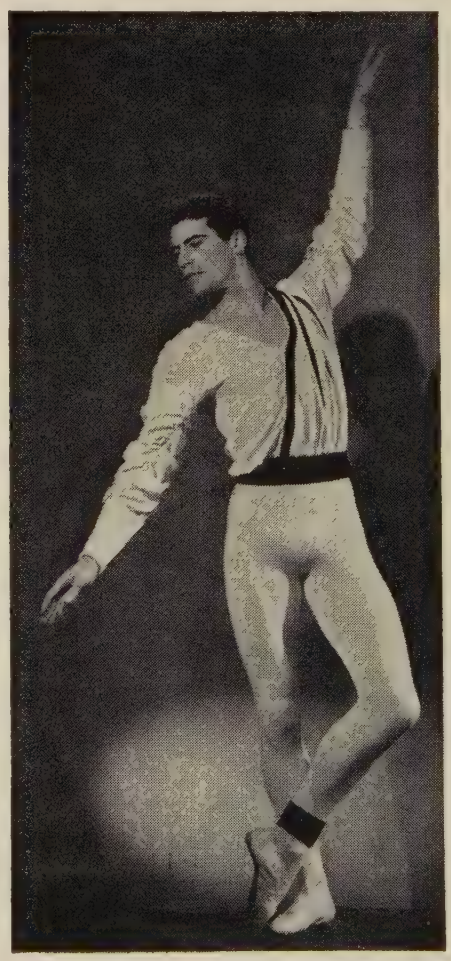
Before Somes was called up in 1941, Ashton had cast him to dance with Fonteyn again in *Dante Sonata* and *The Wise Virgins.* After the war they were seen together in many ballets before Helpmann's resignation from the company in 1950 left Somes as Fonteyn's undisputed partner.

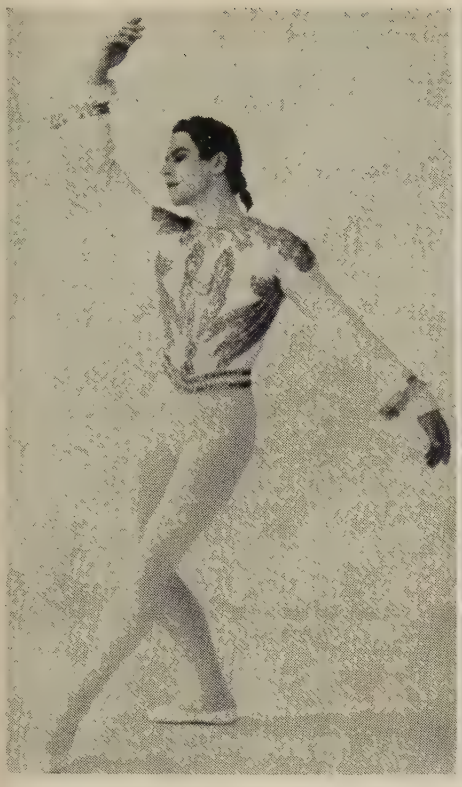
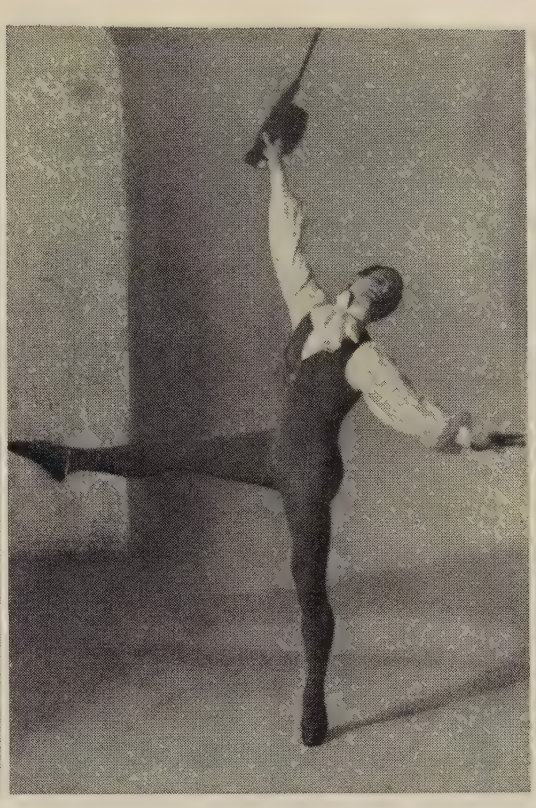
By this time he had largely overcome his early shortcomings as a partner in the classical ballets. From *Horoscope* onwards he never seems to have found any difficulty in partnering Fonteyn in the duets invented for them by Ashton, and I cannot remember any deficiencies in this respect in his early performances in *Giselle,* but for some reason in the *Bluebird* or *Aurora pas de deux* and to some extent in *Swan Lake* he was often very far from satisfactory.

It was not so much that he fumbled or made mistakes — although this happened occasionally — as that he looked all the time tense and worried, so that the audience became tense and worried too. I suspect that on some such occasions the only person in the theatre who looked really relaxed and confident was Fonteyn. If she was ever less than happy about his qualities as a partner, she never once showed it on stage. This, I imagine, must have done more than anything else to help Somes, with his characteristic tenacity, to persevere until he had achieved the assurance which now marks his work as a partner in classical *pas de deux.*

Nowadays, when Fonteyn and Somes walk on stage together at the beginning, for instance, of the third act *pas de deux* in *The Sleeping Beauty,* their poise and authority are such as to command a

IN SYMPHONIC VARIATIONS: *One of Somes' first important rôles after the Royal Ballet came to Covent Garden in 1946.* *Photo: John Vickers.*



SOMES IN THREE MOODS: Left, as Prince Florimund in the last act of The Sleeping Beauty. *Centre, as the Caricaturist in Massine's* Mam'zelle Angot *(Photos: Gordon Anthony). Right, as Aminta in the last act of Ashton's* Sylvia *(Photo: Robert Harper).*

heightening and concentration of attention from the audience. The art of walking across a stage is essential to perfection in any performance, yet it is one in which some of our young dancers, although brilliant perhaps in some *tours de force,* are lacking. Dolin, in his book on the art of partnering, puts the teaching of a proper walk as the first requisite: "to walk on the stage as a man, firmly and with well-measured gait". Similarly, Blasis had written two centuries earlier that "a graceful manner of walking on the stage is of much importance to a dancer, although a number of our artists neglect it. . . . This is a serious defect, as it offends the eye and deprives the performance of its pleasing illusion."

To walk well, important at all times, is even more so when dancing with someone like Fonteyn, who herself demonstrates to perfection not only the "noble, elegant and elevated carriage, replete with dignity and gracefulness, but void of the least affectation" demanded by Blasis for serious or heroic rôles, but also how large a part a different way of walking can play in characterisation. Think of how she walks as Sylvia the huntress, striding boldly and freely through the woods, and then of her hesitant walk as Chloë, restored to Daphnis' arms; contrast both of these with the way her Ondine first steps, playfully but experimentally, on to dry land, or her Cinderella arrives at the ball in a trance of sheer delight, and you will see what an artist her partner must be if he is to come near her in this respect.

Fortunately, Somes too is a master of this skill. The most famous example is in *Ballet Imperial,* where his slow, stately progress across an empty stage, so deliberately setting one pointed foot in front of the other, became the perfect symbol of the courtly lover, and has remained in the memory of all who saw it as the touchstone by which subsequent performers are tried and (so far) found wanting.

Other rôles gave evidence of the same quality. As the old prophet in the final scene of *Tiresias* Somes was handicapped by a costume revealing the body of a young man and thus spoiling the illusion of age, but his walk, each foot edging nervously forward, was authentically that of a man both old and blind. In *The Firebird* he rightly adapts his gait in each episode according to whether he is exploring a dark garden, dancing in the moonlight with an enchanted princess or taking part in his own betrothal ceremony.

Similarly, his princes in *Swan Lake* and *The Sleeping Beauty* enter a hunting place differently from the way they arrive in a court chamber, yet always in a way befitting the character.

Somes is thus fitted to walk on stage beside Margot Fonteyn. Once there, he accompanies and supports her in their *pas de deux* with the confident but admiring demeanour which sets off the poised and serene grandeur of her dancing. No two performances of ballet are ever identical, but their long experience together and his quick anticipation of her every need and wish enable them to give an illusion of inevitability.

Fonteyn's has never been an art of extremes. Not for her the highest *developpé,* the biggest jump, the fastest turns. The one technical feat in which she excels is that of balance, and it is balance in its other sense — a harmonious relationship between all the parts of the whole, so that none outweighs the other — which is the distinguishing feature of her art. In the same way, in the combined art of Fonteyn and Somes in *pas de deux,* we do not see the very high and long-held lifts which (when not carried to excess) lend excitement to the work of some other dancers. Where Fonteyn and Somes are supreme is in that they achieve exactly what they intend without any apparent strain or wasted effort.

Ashton has used these two dancers in his gradual development of a distinctive style of adagio work. The characteristic passage of the ballerina, supported by her partner so that her feet move delicately either just on or just above the stage, is one of the features of this style. It looks light and easy, yet because the ballerina's weight is entirely to her partner's side I imagine it must be particularly hard to do with an appearance of ease.

But more important than any technical feats of this or any other kind is the fact that Ashton has made for these two dancers a series of dances which, considered together, make up a remarkably extensive anatomy of the nature of love, which they interpret with a touching delicacy and compassion. There is an almost playful quality in parts of *Ondine*; there is tenderness mixed with ardour in *Sylvia.* In *La Péri* Somes vainly pursues a fascinating illusion, in *Symphonic Variations* he gravely supports an Olympian figure. In *Cinderella* the dancers create a mood of quiet serenity, in *Daphnis and Chloë* they celebrate the strength of true love.

Add to these their duets in the classics: the happy courtship in the first act of *Giselle,* and the deeper, self-sacrificing love of the second act; the longing of *Swan Lake,* act 2, and the glittering triumph of act 3; the sweetly condescending graciousness of *Casse Noisette*; and in *The Sleeping Beauty* the romanticism of the vision scene and the splendour of the final *pas de deux.*

In all of these Fonteyn gives performances of a fastidious distinction and pure beauty which have made her one of the world's great ballerinas; and in all of them her partner deserves a full share of the praise.

To be continued next month

DIVERTIMENTO : *Michel Boudot, centre, with Diana Atherton and Janice Parker in Joanne Steuer's ballet to Rock 'n' Roll music.*

The Descending Curve

During the past year, the Sunday Ballet Club has given four Sunday evening performances at Wyndhams Theatre. The first three of these showed a gradual improvement at each performance, but the fourth, given on January 11, displayed a marked deterioration in quality.

Reviewed by CLIVE BARNES

Photographed by ROY ROUND

IF it is third time lucky, what is it fourth time? Certainly the Sunday Ballet Club's fourth programme was not so lucky as its three predecessors, for here there was hardly a glint of true promise, and only one gleam — almost startling in its surrounding contrast — of professionalism in the whole programme. It is perhaps significant that this was the first programme in which there was not a single ballet choreographed by a dancer currently working in a well-known company. This was not entirely the Club's fault for it had originally intended to produce a work by Oleg Briansky, but Briansky's injury had forced its abandonment, a "modern dance" production by John Broome being substituted. As the pros and cons of the Club's artistic guidance and direction are already being banded about in these pages, it is hardly appropriate for me to enter into that argument here. So I will content myself with saying that if the choreographers had come to me with their combination of ideas, stories and projected music, I would have been extremely hesitant in accepting any of them. While it is a fine thing to champion lost causes there seems little point in furthering forlorn hopes, and it is not being wise after the event to say that most of these ballets were dead ducks before the rise of the curtain.

THE BALLETS

DIVERTIMENTO. Choreography : Joanne Steuer. Music : Contemporary. Costumes : Murray Arbeid.

THE VENUS FLOWER. Choreography : Faith Worth. Music : Bartók "Contrasts". Costumes : Edward Jarrold.

JOURNEY OF THE BEGGARS. Choreography : John Broome. Music : Yvonne Cox.

PIQUES D'AMOUR. Production : George Hall. Choreography: Claire Roberts. Music : Wilfred Joseph. Décor and Costumes : Deanna Wisbey. Lighting : George Hall.

ART can thrive on the contrast between diamonds and cabbages, yet that contrast must prove itself illuminating — a Hamlet in modern dress may be acceptable, but never *just* because it is in modern dress. Joanne Steuer — an American now teaching jazz movement in London — had the idea of performing a classical ballet to rock 'n' roll music, thinking no doubt that classical *enchaînements* would acquire a quite new significance when danced to the strains of Elvis Presley's *Blue Suede Shoes.*

Had she chosen genuine jazz the experiment — if this is not too large a word for such an unassuming little gimmick — might have stood some chance of success. Yet performed to the meritricious background noises of the eternal juke-box, the attempt was probably damned from the word go.

Even so enormous choreographic talent might still have redeemed the work. But Steuer's choreography was but a pallid reflection of pseudo-Balanchine classicism — an unmemorable *pas de trois* devoid of style, form, wit or sensibility. The work was moderately well danced by Diana Atherton, Janice Parker and Michel Boudot, who all deserved to be seen in choreography that might have shown their abilities in a more favourable light.

For the story of *The Venus Flower* its young choreographer, Faith Worth, went to the Oscar Wilde short story *The Nightingale and the Rose* — I wonder why? The purple patches of Wilde's slickly overwritten fable completely eluded the choreographer, and she was not even able to make the story really intelligible, despite the fact of her printing a few garbled extracts in the programme. This tale of a Nightingale who sacrifices its life-blood to provide the red rose needed by a student to win the love of a girl, who eventually spurns him for a rich suitor, is not very suitable for choreographic translation. To make assurance of failure doubly sure, Worth chose to wed this theme with Bartók's *Contrasts* for Violin, Clarinet and Piano, a combination in its way as unsuitable as would be, say, that between Salinger and Wagner.

Strangely enough in this short story Wilde speaks — and who should know better? — of most artists being "all style without any sincerity". This ballet was all sincerity without any style. Having saddled herself with a difficult story and unsuitable music, Faith Worth proceeded to produce choreography that was innocuous, fluent, moderately musical, and here and there showed the beginnings of a sense of characterisation.

This was the first work by Faith Worth that I had seen, although I believe she has enjoyed a certain success with earlier ballets. While there is nothing in this present work that I could fairly describe as particularly promising, its choreographer need have no cause completely to lose heart. But what I suspect she requires is more experience as a dancer (I think she is at present a member of the Covent Garden Opera Ballet) and also needs to give far more thought to what ballet is about, what it can and what it can't do.

The best thing about the work was the opportunities its rather conventional choreography gave to its young dancers. I found myself particularly impressed by Deanne Bergsma as the Nightingale, who showed an attractive personality and a soft and fluid dance style. Kenneth Barlow — whose part consisted chiefly of a somewhat monotonous series of spins and jumps — proved almost equally effective as a melancholy student with a pale cast of thought. Clive Molloy, filling in at short notice for the indisposed Keith Rosson, brought a spurt of humour to the pompous rich suitor.

After the interval we had *Journey of the Beggars,* a dance-drama in five episodes by John Broome. The programme describes the work : "The journey of the beggars is the journey of all people from the first light to the last ; through the wars of nature and men, through love and jealousy, peace and

conflict to the final goal which is but the beginning of the same journey." Yes, it was one of *those* ballets.

I suspect that John Broome did almost precisely what he set out to do, but whether that was, in fact, worth doing is another and more important problem. This had a great deal of the professional know-how that the rest of the programme lamentably lacked. The thought behind it was banal and the "choreography" seemed little more than might have been contrived by a competent theatrical producer — yet the operative word is competent. At times Broome's handling of scurrying crowds and the groupings he devised for his large cast were truly impressive. While I feel no great inclination to see many more similar dance-dramas, I would jump at the opportunity of seeing what he might do with the Capitol scene in *Julius Caesar.*

The "music" by Yvonne Cox, with effects and recording by Peter Long, seemed an interesting sound-montage, a mixture of music, sound, noise and silence which was extremely ambitious and, within limits, successful. The atmosphere was further heightened by simple, effective lighting, and a cast — drawn largely from R.A.D.A., where Broome teaches — who showed far more power and conviction than the average clutch of ballet students.

Apart from the well-thumbed unoriginality of the theme, the dance-drama's cardinal defect was its lack of any defined dance style, or even dance technique. Compare it with Jooss's treatment of a slightly similar subject matter in *The Misty Way,* and

THE VENUS FLOWER *(right): Douglas Hill as a Dying Red Rose Tree, Deanne Bergsma, as the Nightingale, and Kenneth Barlow as the Student in Faith Worth's ballet.*

JOURNEY OF THE BEGGARS *(below): John Broome, extreme right, in a "Conflict" scene from his own ballet. Some of his work bore a strong similarity to the dances of Inbal from Israel.*

PIQUES D'AMOUR : *Margit Muller, as Lucellia, and Malcolm Chisham, as Berthold, before the statue of Aphrodite in Claire Roberts' ballet. In the picture on the right, Margit Muller is seen with the Spirit of the Statue played by Valeare Hollman.*

Broome's deficiencies become obvious. *The Journey of the Beggars* was much more a cliché set to movement than a dance-drama, yet for all that the work held the interest. His use of the stage as a diagonal plane showed an originality that many young choreographers might envy, but if he is to develop some form of dance theatre he must be urged firstly to develop a basic language of expression, and secondly to come to grips with themes the universality of which have not been blunted by repetition.

The programme ended with a ballet in two scenes produced by George Hall and called *Piques D'Amour*. This proved so awful that probably only the French have a word for it. I am not quite sure what it was about, nor do I really care. Two merry peasants, Berthold (Malcolm Chisham) and Lucellia (Margit Muller) have some kind of a lover's tiff — she is apparently raped by a stray boy from the *corps de ballet* — and are reunited by the spirit of a statue of Aphrodite "to whom all young girls bring their love troubles", and a winsome small girl.

Its Hungarian choreographer, Claire Roberts, believes, according to the programme, "that although ballet belongs to the most refined of arts it should always be first of all entertainment". Unfortunately *Piques D'Amour* proved miserably lacking in both refinement and entertainment ; in fact, it came close to being an insult to the taste and intelligence.

It was by far the most expensive-looking production yet attempted by the Club, and the saddest thing about it was to see so much money apparently wasted. The scenery and costumes were garish and hideous, showing none of the comparatively good taste traditionally associated with chocolate-boxes. Uninteresting music, dull and unimaginative choreography, poorly conceived lighting, clumsy and untidy dancing, all added up to a sorry display. The one thing that can be said of the ballet was that it had unity.

Although the Sunday Ballet Club's first year of operation has ended on a minor key, its organisers can look back with a certain satisfaction for what has been achieved. Naturally most of the ballets they produce are bound to be criticised adversely. With young choreographers, having made all due allowances, one has to be cruel only to be kind, and the majority of the works produced by an apprentice organisation are found to be worthless, for that is the nature of the beast. Yet while giving credit for everything that has been achieved by this group in the face of the most appalling difficulties, it is still fair to say, with the gross ingratitude of debtors, that things could be a lot better. If a thing is worth doing it is worth doing badly — but just how bad can one get?

DANSES CONCERTANTES

Continued from page 15

principals before the reintroduction of the March. MacMillan was far less formal, including a bustling general dance full of exits and entrances for the full company, a *pas de trois,* a rumbustious solo for a male dancer, a *grand adagio* for the ballerina and five cavaliers, and a *pas de deux.*

It is a plotless ballet, but has clear wisps and eddies of emotion running through it, so that anyone feeling so inclined could put some perfectly convincing stories to it — although let us hope that no one ever does. While a considerably lesser work, it is something in the nature of a first draft for MacMillan's *Agon ;* indeed, MacMillan's versions of these two ballets bear a not dissimilar relationship one to another than that which is shown by the two scores.

For a first professional ballet *Danses Concertantes* proved extraordinarily promising. The choreographic vocabulary MacMillan used is strikingly original, an ideal realisation of music that is dry and dusty with powdered diamonds. The smoothness of conventional classical dancing is frequently sharpened into angularity, while its line is jarringly broken by separately articulated movements.

Even here MacMillan makes use of an idiom which we have since grown to recognise as peculiarly his own ; the stabbing, percussive point-work, a certain emphasis on off-balance yet dissonantly harmonious movements, and a certain spiky use of the limbs, all carried out with a flowing fluency that gives even its angularity a strange rounded quality.

The intrinsic merits of the ballet are to be found chiefly in the brilliant "mask" dance for the ballerina and her mysterious suitors — which clearly showed the quality of MacMillan's imagination — the inventive *pas de deux* and the exciting male solo, the choreographer's first mature essay in the "Britton/Trecu" style which has since become a feature of his work.

But for all the promise it is essentially a song of inexperience. Its structural faults are glaring, and quite often the choreography shows a tendency towards slickness, an over-anxiety to please and to impress. However, there can be no doubt that it was a landmark in British ballet, and its projected revival is most welcome, not the least because it shows Maryon Lane in one of her best rôles, and the unusually successful designs by Nicholas Georgiadis.

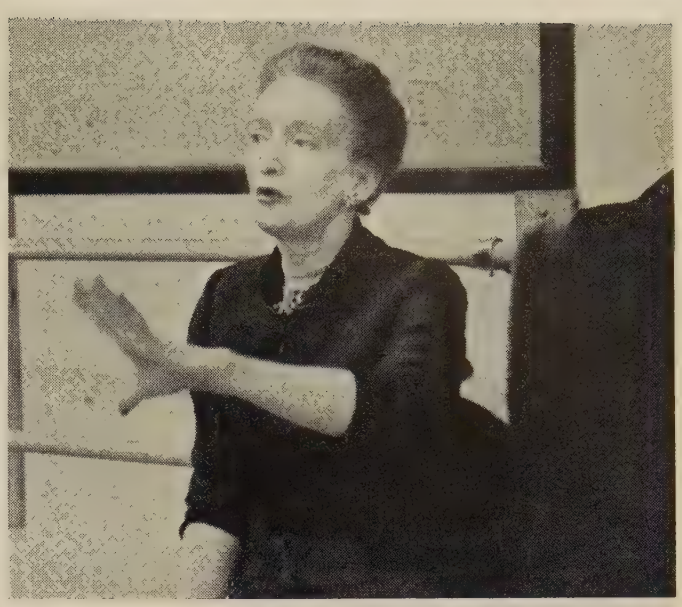
In its way the début of Georgiadis was almost as distinguished and even as significant as that of MacMillan himself. His fantastic palace with its almost architectural sense of place, matches the atmosphere of music and choreography with delicate exactness. His brilliant sense of colour made it as exciting decoratively as any ballet seen in Britain since the war, while his costumes — perhaps at times a little fussy in detail — had an overriding sense of *chic* which gave the ballet just the right air of smartness.

On its first performance *Danses Concertantes* was considerably enhanced by a

Continued on page 27

Doris Humphrey answers the critics

The José Limón company, with Doris Humphrey as its director and choreographer, came to London in the late summer of 1957. In the November issue of Dance and Dancers **of that year, Clive Barnes wrote an enthusiastic article on the season which criticised a few of its features. Several months after that he received a long letter from Miss Humphrey answering some of his criticisms. Owing to lack of space at the time and because the season was long since past, we did not publish the letter. On December 29 of last year, Doris Humphrey died (an obituary by Arthur Todd appears on page 34 of this issue), and we feel that this is the moment to publish the letter as it gives great insight into certain aspects of the American Modern Dance as well as into a very remarkable personality.**



A recent portrait of Doris Humphrey by Radford Bascome.

I AM "moved", as they say in Quaker Meetings, "to bear witness" about the José Limón Co. Season in London, taking as a springboard your review in the November issue of *Dance and Dancers,* which, although in the main thoughtful and perceptive, has, I think, some blind spots. One of these is in the area of music and rhythm, and the phrasing of movement. That you and your fellow-critics should be quite unaware of the imagination and subtlety of the Limón Co. in matters musical and rhythmic is quite understandable, as this company is probably unique in this respect, and foreign critics have no eyes to grasp it. Moreover, since this is so, it is no doubt our fault for not making a detailed explanation on the programme. There was a brief outline of the sources and aims of the Limón Co. on the back of the souvenir programme, which I trust you and others saw, but did you? You state in your review that "the right place for an explanation was in the programme". However, as there was no room to go into detail anyway, here is, belatedly, a brief analysis of our approach to rhythm and movement in relationship to music.

First of all, the choreographers and leading dancers in this company are all extremely musical. Both my mother and father were musicians and music was familiar to me from earliest childhood. My dance training included the study of piano and Dalcroze Eurythmics. The background was useful when, as a young dancer, I was with Ruth St. Denis during the period when she composed music visualisations for her company. This gave me a keen ear and an enduring love of music as the basis of dance. Mr. Limón came early to music, too, and learned to play the piano classics with a devotion which he has never lost. Similarly the others, Pauline Koner, Lucas Hoving, Betty Jones, Ruth Currier, are all expert musicians with fastidious ears. With musical resources such as these, unique in dance companies I imagine, it was inevitable that music of unusual merit would play a dominant part in the Limón repertory. Incidentally, this is the first point overlooked by the critics. Nowhere was there a mention of the unusually high standard of the music which I affirm was unhackneyed, admirably suited to the needs of the dance and in impeccable taste. And here I must diverge to disagree with your estimate of the Priaulx Rainier score as "dry and uninventive". Although the performance of this work was below par, and therefore not at its best, even so it seemed original and provocative to me — can it be that this neglected English composer, whom I found to be quite unknown in her native land, has something to say which you have not ears to hear?

To go back to the use of music in the dances. Early in the nineteen-thirties I discarded the idea of music visualisation. It seemed quite unnecessary, and indeed false, to force the dance to follow music exactly. The two arts have such utterly different media that the dance could only be damaged by being cut to fit every phrase, every beat and every measure. Moreover it was a redundant practice. As the composer has said it all once, why repeat it in movement terms? So I evolved a theory of relating the dance to the music, while leaving each its individuality intact. This results in a dance and music partnership, in which neither dominates or imitates the other, in short a true collaboration. Often the movement is in counterpoint to the music, both in rhythm-phrase and tempo, and this applies not only to musically based dances but to the dramatic pieces as well. However, this is so skilfully done, I say with pardonable pride, that at worst there is no jar to the onlooker, and at best he sees and enjoys the fitting together of the two entities. I'm afraid this escapes almost everybody in Europe, where they are used to conventional rhythmic and phrasing procedures. This lack of perception was particularly apparent in the appraisal of the music dances, such as Vivaldi's *Concerto Grosso* and Pergolesi's *Concertino.* Mr. Limón and Miss Koner, the respective choreographers, quite agree with me about the rhythmic dance structure above the music, and looked at in this way, not just as Baroque art, or patterns or moods, these two dances are seen to be imaginative and inventive pieces of choreography with a highly sensitive regard for the relationship of movement to music. But nowhere were these subtleties perceived or mentioned.

Other important elements went unnoticed as well, such as dynamics ; every movement phrase of this repertory is consciously coloured by dynamic shifts consonant with the theme, we are at great pains to keep movement alive by constant changes in texture ; originality — there are no outworn clichés in the Limón repertory ; structure — these are all firm, with no long padded passages, no meaningless introduction of irrelevant material ; communicability — the aim is not intellectual or esoteric or pyrotechnical, but seeks to convey in quite simple terms some aspect of human experience.

One more comment, and this is specifically about the *Lament for Ignacio Sanchez Mejias.* Here again I must explain the approach, which is, in a way, similar to the theory about music. My attitude to the use of words with dance is that they must form a collaboration, each staying within its own orbit. I see words as a means of conveying facts, and the dance as the means of expressing emotion. Of course the word can be eloquent in describing feeling too, but in a fusion of the two arts, I believe the feeling should be the function of the dance and the words should convey whatever we need to know about place, time, state of being, or any fact which the dance, by its nature, cannot express. Consequently your comment that "she has made no attempt to match the poet's very precise verbal symbolism" is quite correct and quite conscious on my part. All the poet's vivid words of a descriptive nature are left to stand alone, once the emotional reactions to these things form the choreographic structure. It is not intended to be a dance *per se,* but a theatre piece, a synthesis of the dramatic arts. I must say, however, that there was one damaging circumstance in the presentation of the piece. Formerly all the lines had been spoken by the dancers themselves, but in Europe I was persuaded to substitute a speaker in the pit because of the performers' American accent. This was a disastrous mistake which I was immediately aware of. The focus was lost, and the immediacy of the drama hitherto coming entirely from the stage was dissapated and weakened.

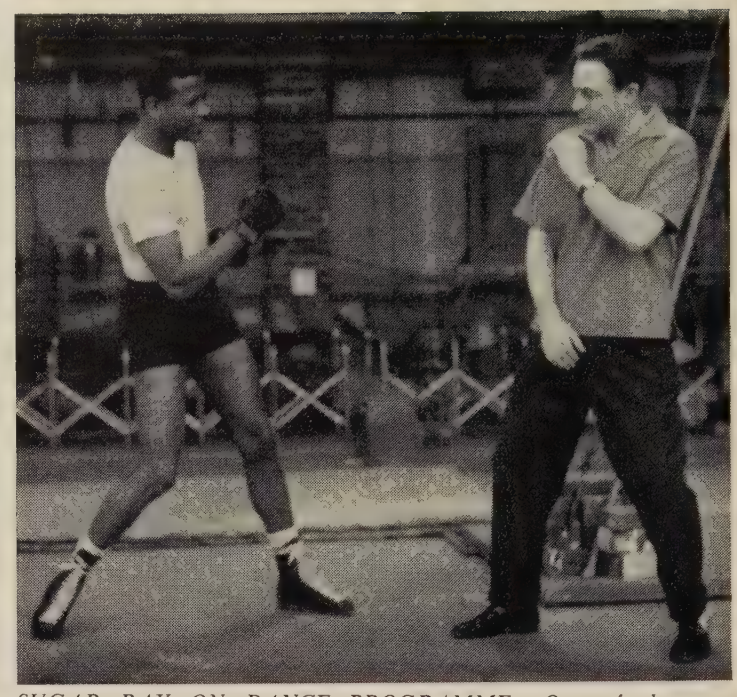
I realise that all the foregoing will savour of the stigma that you complain of in American modern dancers, our monastic asceticism and our deadly seriousness, but is it too much to ask dance critics to consider us seriously as a temporary antidote to more Giselles, Sleeping Beauties and Graduation Balls? And yes, I agree wholeheartedly with your criticism of London critics who did not find either the time nor the interest to examine the Limón Co. intelligently as to its aims, technique or place in the dance picture.

There is much more, but I am sure this is quite enough for one effusion. Thank you for being London's most sympathetic perceptive commentator on the Limón Co. Season.

Sincerely,

DORIS HUMPHREY.

BERIOSOVA MARRIES: Svetlana Beriosova, ballerina of the Royal Ballet, with Masud Mahommet Khan after their wedding on January 23. See "Two weddings — two parties" below.



SUGAR RAY ON DANCE PROGRAMME: One of the most interesting dance programmes on TV in New York recently was arranged by Gene Kelly and called "Dancing — A Man's Game". Kelly, seen here with prize fighter Sugar Ray Robinson, attempted to prove the relationship that exists between dancing and athletics.

curtain up!

Two weddings—two parties

SVETLANA BERIOSOVA'S wedding day seems to have been in duplicate. On January 23, she was married to Masud Mahommet Khan in both the Russian Church and also at the Chelsea Registry Office. Her father, Nicholas Beriosoff, flew over from Stuttgart, where he is ballet-master, to be present at the ceremonies and also to give her away. Members of the Russian Church gave Svetlana the most beautiful ikon as a wedding present.

Not only did she have two weddings but also two after-wedding parties. The first, from mid-day until 1.30 p.m., was for ballet dignitaries which included Dame Ninette de Valois, most of the administration of Covent Garden, most of the ballet critics and friends of the bridegroom. After they had gone the scene changed somewhat; partly on account of the fact that Beriosova's Sloane Street flat would have been too small to accommodate everyone and partly because most of the Royal Ballet were rehearsing until after 1 o'clock and it was impossible to get everyone there at the same time. However, there was an interim period between the two parties when Dame Margot Fonteyn, Frederick Ashton, Alexander Grant, Kenneth MacMillan and several others arrived too late for the party to which they had been invited but stayed on for the next. At around 2 o'clock the dancers poured in and the celebrations went on until well into the afternoon and the time when the bride and bridegroom were due to leave for their honeymoon in Paris. You would think that Svetlana, looking beautiful in a ballerina-length white lace and satin dress, would have appeared to be tired considering she had been around since about 6 in the morning — not a bit of it, she talked animatedly to everyone, handed round food and drinks and appeared to enjoy it like a good hostess at a successful party. Very different was she to the usual lay-figure of a bride at most wedding parties.

And how, you may well ask, do I know all this? For the simple reason that I enjoyed the party so much that I cheated and stayed on for all the parties — stayed and stayed until the rest of the day was a dead loss for anything else.

Creator de Valois returns

IT seems an age since we saw a new ballet by Ninette de Valois, not in fact since her *Don Quixote* in 1950. Now it seems that she is making a come-back as a choreographer, for she will mount a ballet based on the fable of *The Lady of Shalott*. The score, by Arthur Bliss, has been completed some time ago; at the time of writing the designer has not been announced.

Swedes together

BERYL GREY'S height has been causing Covent Garden a deal of trouble. Most male dancers are too short to partner her with ease and her usual touring partner, Oleg Briansky, is still indisposed. As I reported last month, there was a strong chance that André Eglevsky would partner her during her forthcoming guest appearances with the Royal Ballet, but this idea fell through. Other wild rumours flying around have been about Yuri Kondratov of the Bolshoi, while a Copenhagen paper hinted that Frank Schaufuss would come and dance with Grey. Now it turns out that another Scandinavian is the final choice — young Caj Selling of the Royal Swedish Ballet. If this materialises, and anything may happen before the night, then there will be some sort of national relationship between the two because Beryl is, of course, married to a Swede — Dr. Sven Svenson. At the moment Covent Garden is playing safe and, in their leaflets, name no partner at all for Grey in *Le Lac des Cygnes*.

Royal Ballet through next year

POSSIBLY no company in the world is able to plan ahead so far as the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden. At the moment their plans are almost completed until the autumn of next year.

Apart from a short provincial tour and a possible tour of Italy in the Spring of 1960, the company will remain in Bow Street for the longest period of its existence since it moved from Sadler's Wells Theatre. This means no more American tours until heaven knows when, possibly never if a statement at a recent press meeting is to be believed.

The plans for the future, in addition to the de Valois work announced above, include a new work by John Cranko, who has recently returned to the organisation of the Royal Ballet. He will mount a work based on the Antigone tragedy which may possibly be his wedding present to Beriosova, announced in the popular press. Ashton is to mount a new version of the old ballet — *La Fille Mal Gardée*. Then Kenneth MacMillan is to create a two-act ballet and Andrée Howard is to mount a work which will quite likely be an extension of her *La Belle Dame sans Merci* for the last Edinburgh Festival. All these works will be given during the season which starts next autumn. For August of next year, it is hoped that it will be possible to put on a completely new production by Ashton of *The Sleeping Beauty*. In fact after this April, the great Tchaikovsky/Petipa ballet will not be seen by Royal Ballet audiences for almost 18 months, and the Oliver Messel designs for the work will be seen no more.

The great film

COVENT GARDEN Opera House has, on several occasions, formed the background to films, but the Paul Czinner filming of the Royal Ballet, shot at the end of January, is the first film to be made on the spot and directly concerned with the resident company. Two Sundays and one whole night are all that it took to film the whole of *Ondine* and *The Firebird* and act 2 of *Le Lac des Cygnes*. This must have been pretty tiring for the company, and for the principals in particular, but when you think of the weeks and months that usually go into making even the simplest kind of film it really took an infinitesimal time.

A vast wooden stage was erected over the stalls for taking the big tracking camera, while many other cameras were dotted around the Opera House. The most surprising thing about the whole proceedings was the complete lack of noise and fuss. The general procedure was for a long passage of a ballet to be gone through first so that the cameras could be set, then it was gone through again and exact measurements taken, then the third time would be the actual shooting. Of course the actual shooting did not always go through without a hitch as possibly an arm of a dancer would not be the same as the others, a lift might wobble or somebody would drop a bit of costume, but on the whole it was as smooth a job as you are ever likely to see in film making. In spite of the late hours and the exhaustion that this kind of production is likely to incur, no tempers were lost, nobody had hysterics or showed any sign of temperament — in fact, as far as this column is concerned, nothing to report.

One thing that particularly impressed me was Lila de Nobili's *Ondine* sets when seen under the super-brilliant film lights — the painting of these sets, mostly done by Nobili herself, is quite exquisite. Let us hope this shows up in the film.

A record for all time

ALMOST in answer to our editorial of a few months ago, the British Film Institute is exploring the possibilities of collecting films of the ballet and also of making future films of notable performances and recording ballets. A committee has been formed and several meetings have already been held to discuss the various questions and in the near future I hope to be able to tell you more about this project for which the art of ballet in the future will have every reason to be grateful. Lord Wakehurst has already offered his films which record the Royal Ballet's tours, the Bolshoi and other companies and several notable interpretations of *Giselle*. Mrs. Michael Wood, the wife of the Royal Ballet's general manager, showed the committee a most excellent film she had made in colour of Andrée Howard's *La Fête Etrange*. So if any of you are occasionally disturbed, as I have sometimes been. by a faint whirring noise during a Royal Ballet performance, just be patient because Mrs. Wood is doing a splendid job.

Ballet's invalids

EVERYONE will be sorry to hear that Gordon Hamilton is seriously ill in the American hospital in Paris. In recent years he has worked in Vienna as ballet-master at the State Opera, but he was formerly very well known here with the Sadler's Wells Ballet and also with Roland Petit's Les Ballets de Paris. Australian born, he was a strong character dancer who added great quality to the performances of both these companies. I sincerely hope that by the time these words appear he will be well on the way to recovery.

A letter from Oleg Briansky in Denmark gives news of the highly successful operation performed on his leg which has been troubling him for so long. The operation was performed in the same hospital which made such a good job of Flemming Flindt's serious knee trouble. Flindt will soon be dancing again with his company, the Royal Danish Ballet, and Briansky intends to start taking classes again soon in Paris.

Scribes at work

RICHARD BUCKLE, former Editor of *Ballet* and great exhibition organiser, tells me that he has almost completed editing Lydia Sokolova's memoirs of the Diaghilev Ballet. Sokolova (Hilda Munnings) was the first British dancer to become a Diaghilev ballerina. Her reminiscences of that time, some of which have appeared in *Dance and Dancers,* are always racy and highly entertaining. Apparently she has written a great deal of her memoirs herself, the rest she had told to Buckle and they were tape-recorded. Remembering how splendidly he got her style of telling stories when he wrote his book, *In Search of Diaghilev,* I feel that the new book which John Murray is publishing will make a most invaluable contribution to ballet literature and Diaghileffiana.

Another Diaghilev dancer is writing yet another autobiography (already he has two to his credit) and this time Anton Dolin says he will "chastise the younger critics — the ones who don't know what they are talking about". I remember Dolin pursuing a similar theme in the pages of *Dance and Dancers* a few years ago, even criticising in particular one of our own reviewers. I very much look forward to seeing what he will have to say this time. A gallup poll amongst my younger colleagues has revealed that very few of them are getting ready to flee the country to escape from Dolin's wrath. But one did say *he* was also writing a book "to chastise the older dancers".

Stork Inc.

THIS is the time of the year when the storks are apt to carry on a shuttle service between various ballet mothers. This month, I hear of activity as far flung as Copenhagen, Paris and Rhodesia. Ethery Pagava, former Ballets des Champs-Elysées and de Cuevas dancer, has given birth to a son. Inge Sand, a principal dancer of the Royal Danish Ballet, has had a daughter. While Mary Drage, popular ex-soloist of the Royal Ballet, is the proud mother of a boy. For each of the mothers, it is their first child.

happy birthday to...

		April
Carolyn Clark	American Ballet Theatre	10
Judith Sinclair	Royal Ballet I	12
Kenn Martynne	Dancing in TV	14
Keith Milland	Royal Ballet I	16
Henry Legerton	Royal Ballet II	17
Janet Kedge	London's Festival Ballet	18
Algeranoff	Norsk Ballet, Oslo	18
John Taras	De Cuevas International Ballet	18
Sallie Wilson	American Ballet Theatre	18
Jennifer Alderton	London's Festival Ballet	18
Gary Burne	Royal Ballet I	20
Richard Beaty	American Ballet Theatre	20
Elsa Marianne von Rosen	Royal Swedish Ballet	21
Ronald Hynd	Royal Ballet I	22
Elaine King	American Ballet Theatre	22
Milena Vukotic	De Cuevas International Ballet	23
Claudie Algeranova		24
Angela Leigh	Canadian National Ballet	24
Sandra Sommers	American Ballet Theatre	24
Armando Navarro	Du Cuevas International Ballet	24
Kenneth Melville		24
Beth Fisher	American Ballet Theatre	28
John Sale	Royal Ballet I	28
Anne Howard	Royal Ballet I	29
Yvonne Meyer		29

Dancer You Will Know

Photo : Roy Round

GEORGINA PARKINSON

BORN in Brighton on August 20, 1938. Started to study dancing when she was 9 years old at the Audrey Kemp School in Brighton. When she was 12 had an audition for the Royal Ballet School, which she entered in 1951. Joined company in 1954. Rôles : Prayer in Coppélia ; *Lilac Fairy and Fairy of the Woodland Glades in* The Sleeping Beauty ; Pas de Six *in* Swan Lake ; *Gypsy in* Petrushka ; *Fairy Winter in* Cinderella ; *Romantic Love in* The Shadow ; Pas de Trois *in* La Fête Etrange.

IT must have been in *Petrushka* that we first noticed Georgina Parkinson — it must have been, for her hoydenish good looks and high spirits as a somewhat starlettish gypsy girl positively screamed out for recognition. Later we started to spot her in the *corps de ballet*, sometimes with approval, sometimes with annoyance as she ever so slightly trailed behind the beat.

However in recent weeks her real talent has slowly been emerging, and she has given a number of performances that are clear pointers towards a bright future. Her performance as the Lilac Fairy was not only exceptionally well balanced and musically phrased, but possessed an authority — calm, natural and unforced — that would have been notable in an experienced dancer, and was quite remarkable for a debutante.

Possessed with a naturally lovely line and an *arabesque* that holds hints of grandeur, her dancing has a meticulous clarity. While her legs have neatness, it is her arms that have character and individuality. Her first attempt at the Prayer solo in *Coppélia* looked refreshingly artless, and contrasted interestingly with the coltish elegance she had brought to Fairy Winter in *Cinderella*. It would now be interesting to see her in a purely character rôle, to see if she lives up to the promise held out by that exuberant Gypsy.

Slipped Discs and Correct Posture in New Books

A Companion to record-buying

The Decca Book of Ballet. Edited by David Drew (Frederick Muller, 63*s.*).

THE Decca Record company have gathered together all their records which have even the remotest connection with ballet, asked a collection of people, whose ability to write is of varied quality, to provide notes on the music and the ballets, and jammed it all into an exceedingly well-produced volume. The Mike Davis colour picture of Markova on the jacket is charming, the printing and the photographic reproduction is excellent — and those are about the only kind things one can say of this book as a whole. Seldom have I seen a book of such uneven quality and quantity, though it is as a whole that it must be adversely judged. Some of its parts are most informative, particularly those by Clive Barnes (though this should not be interpreted as being a mutual admiration society), David Hunt on the Strauss family, David Drew on Stravinsky, and a section on Delibes by Michael Williamson and a good many other sections to boot. On the other hand some ballets are dismissed in a most cursory way, a particularly bad example being William Mann's meagre contribution on Massine's *Les Présages* (Tchaikovsky's Fifth Symphony); while some of the stories are quite incorrect, notably Michael Williamson's version of Massine's *Mam'zelle Angot.* There are innumerable mistakes which would have kept the late Lionel Bradley burning midnight oil for over a year.

It would appear that several of the writers have not seen the subjects about which they are purporting to give us information, and although this is naturally excusable in works created before World War I, I should have thought that a little more attention to programme notes of ballets made during the last 25 years would have been highly advisable.

Somebody should have asked themselves before the whole project got under way exactly what the purpose of such a volume was going to be. Presumably it is primarily intended as a book of reference. But it is so muddled in its presentation with all the ballets listed under the composers and even then divided into two sections — ballets with specially commissioned scores and symphonic ballets — that it is quite useless as an at-a-glance purveyor of knowledge. Then unless the reader has complete and utter faith in the book as a correct informer it becomes a question of having to double check everything with other volumes. Apart from anything else, the Decca company have not recorded every ballet known, therefore the book is very far from complete, so it still becomes necessary for us to turn to Cyril Beaumont and his *Complete Book of Ballet* and its companion volumes if we want to get anything like a true picture. What then is the use of this book — possibly Decca might emulate the Shell company and distribute presentation copies to all their shareholders so as to convince them that as far as their money is concerned it is on to a good thing.

P. W.

The Stars and Stripes for Ever

Dance Perspectives, No. 1: What Ballet is About: An American Glossary by Lincoln Kirstein (Dance Perspectives, $1.50).

DURING the war one of the happiest things that could happen to a lover of dancing was to get hold of a copy of a magazine founded by Lincoln Kirstein and called *Dance Index.* I say magazine, but *Dance Index* was a special kind of magazine, being a series of very wonderful monographs on all aspects of dancing. During its six years of existence *Dance Index* made an immense contribution to dance history, and its cessation in 1949 left a gap which no other form of dance writing could possibly fill.

Now, nearly ten years later, America has started to produce another series of dance monographs, which to judge from the scope of its initial prospectus bids fair to rival and even eclipse the past glories of the lamented *Dance Index.* The series, which in the first instance is to be issued quarterly, is called *Dance Perspectives,* and is under the editorship of Al Pischl. Before discussing its first number, let me say, with as much force as I can muster, that this magazine is almost without question going to make an important contribution to dance literature. It can be ordered in England from Mr. Beaumont's bookshop in Charing Cross Road, at the English equivalent of $5.00 per year's subscription. As anyone who has ever tried to buy second-hand copies of *Dance Index* will appreciate, at this price it is more than just a subscription, it's an investment.

It was a nice idea on the editor's part to invite Lincoln Kirstein to get the series under way with a monograph entitled *What Ballet is About: An American Glossary,* and illustrated with a fine portfolio of photos by Martha Swope. Kirstein can make many claims to fame, and one of the lesser of these claims is that of being the first ballet "pamphleteer". Many years ago he produced a pamphlet called *Blast at Ballet* which was a stinging, swingeing attack on everyone who ballet-wise thought differently from himself. Now with the energy of an Old Testament prophet he has returned to the attack, smiting out at his enemies with loose chunks of badly-written prose, that bear all too evidently the signs of having been hewn out in the midst of an over-active life. Kirstein is administrative boss of the New York City Ballet, and this monograph sets out to prove that everyone is out of step except Lincoln. Russian ballet stinks, French ballet stinks, British ballet stinks, ballet critics stink, balletomanes stink, modern dance stinks, and as for the Danish ballet, that is too provincial for any words — too provincial even to stink!

I like Kirstein, I like his way of writing, I like his kind of ballets. People who don't are going to be very irritated by this pamphlet, and will see it as only biased and ill-informed clap-trap — which, of course, in part, it is. He is grossly unfair in consigning his opponents to oblivion, but underneath the exaggeration, caricature and special pleading there is a mixed-up core of twisted truth. This is the sort of thing we need once in a while — like cascara.

C. B.

Flesh and bones

Ballet Physique, by Celia Sparger (A. & C. Black, 12*s.* 6*d.*).

THE making of a dancer is subject to many factors other than the purely physical. And yet it has always been the physical side of ballet — the sinews, muscles and bones of the instrument itself — which has been the most imperfectly understood.

Few people have set out to do what Celia Sparger has done: to make a strictly scientific study of physique as applied to the movements which must be used in classical ballet. Results are difficult to measure and far too little research has been undertaken on most of the physical problems to form any basis for hard and fast rules. Yet Miss Sparger has attempted to test and evaluate the evidence offered by the countless variations in the bodies of young children who aspire to be dancers — to predict later physical developments and bodily fluctuations, and to consider whether these will make the child suitable material or not. She also considers how particular variations of physique will ultimately determine the elevation, speed, line, point-work and the child's subsequent performance as a dancer.

This monograph is a craftsmanlike technical study, but it is not beyond the grasp of teachers or anyone who has read her earlier *Anatomy and Ballet.* Although she has by no means completed her research (and does not pretend to have done, for she sometimes admits doubt), the work is of vital interest. The sound teacher with little knowledge of anatomy may succeed in training a physically-ideal child most satisfactorily. But if this same teacher is unable to make the necessary adjustments throughout almost every exercise to correct a defect in a less well-equipped, but by no means unsuitable, child, she may intensify postural or muscular weaknesses. The first half of the book is devoted to the physical requirements necessary in a child who is studying ballet with a view to taking it up professionally: the latter half deals with injuries and their prevention and cure.

It is hard to evaluate a book like this. Not even the physician's knowledge of anatomy is enough. Nevertheless Celia Sparger's reputation speaks for itself; her book is clearly and intelligently written and it promotes careful thought.

E. C. M.

Learning at home

Third Steps in Ballet, by Thalia Mara (Constable, 10*s.* 6*d.*).

IN one respect this is quite a different kind of text-book on classical ballet technique. Although it is designed to introduce basic *allegro* steps to the student, and it fulfils this purpose excellently, its most curious feature is its introduction, which is directed towards the parent. Any ambitious parent therefore who is addicted to tyrannising both teacher and child in search of impossibly rapid progress will do well to heed its advice.

Thalia Mara, who makes no attempt to minimise the hard work involved, firmly stresses that the book is not intended to supplant the teacher. Its purpose is to assist students who wish to practice seriously at home outside their normal ballet classes. If used on these terms, the book should be of immense value, for it is lucidly written and also admirably illustrated. It is to be hoped that the publishers will eventually issue this well-known teacher's three little books in one volume.

E. C. M.

Coppélia Twice Complete

NEW RECORDS
Reviewed by DAVID HUNT

Delibes : *Coppélia.* L'Orchestra de la Suisse Romande (Ernest Ansermet). Decca Stereo SXL 2084-5. 2 12 in. 79*s.* 11*d.*
Minneapolis Symphony Orchestra (Antal Dorati). Mercury MMA 11000-1. 2 12 in. 83*s.* 5*d.*

ANSERMET'S performance of the popular Delibes classic is rather more intriguing to listen to in its stereophonic edition than in the earlier "standard" pressings, which I reviewed in December, 1957. But the added spaciousness and pinpointing of detail brought by stereo cannot alleviate the insipid daintiness and routine dullness of the performance, which must be counted one of the least successful of Ansermet's many ballet recordings.

If the veteran Swiss conductor's apparent intention was to present the work as a delicate period-piece, Antal Dorati's vital direction succeeds in making every moment of it sound excitingly fresh and new. The national dances are given with sensational brilliance and vigour, mime passages which on the Decca set sound meaningless have here a dramatic emphasis that invariably calls to mind the accompanying stage action, and there is a youthful exuberance and spontaneity about the performance generally that even the most hardened ballet-goer will surely find irresistible.

For some unaccountable reason Dorati makes the same 41-bar cut as Ansermet did in the *Marche des Guerrières* (the music often used nowadays as a variation for Frantz in the *divertissement*), but the performance is otherwise complete.

A detail typical of Dorati's more imaginative, "theatrical" approach is that the trumpet fanfares which, just before the end of Act 2. Scene 1, herald the dawn of the *jour de fête* are correctly played "off-stage" (Delibes asks for them in the wings), an effect ignored in the Decca recording and in all present-day productions of the ballet.

Prokofiev's Verona

Prokofiev : *Romeo and Juliet* — Excerpts. New York Philharmonic Orchestra (Dimitri Mitropoulos). Philips ABL 3236. 12 in. 41*s.* 9*d.*

THESE magnificent performances of nine of the movements contained in the first two of the three suites Prokofiev assembled from his great ballet give a much more satisfying account of the music's richness and depth than did Munch's similar RCA disc of excerpts issued last year. Mitropoulos, one-time friend of Prokofiev and famed interpreter of his music, has in the New York Philharmonic a far finer orchestra than Yuri Fayer had at his disposal for the Bolshoi's Covent Garden performances, and anyone still unconvinced that the score is a masterpiece worthy of ranking with the full-length Tchaikovsky ballets should make a special point of hearing the record.

The excerpts include : *Montagues and Capulets, The Young Juliet, Folk Dance, Masques, Romeo and Juliet, Death of Tybalt, Romeo and Juliet's Parting, Friar Laurence* and *Romeo at Juliet's Tomb.* The first item takes in the celebrated Cushion Dance. The *Folk Dance,* which has not been recorded before, accompanies in the ballet the kitchen staff's high-spirited preparations for the Capulet ball. *Masques* is the lively party music played as the disguised Romeo, Mercutio and Benvolio enter the Capulets' house. *Romeo and Juliet,* also new to the catalogue, is the magically evocative music for the Balcony Scene, and the record is almost worth its price for this alone.

Recorded quality is strong and clear, the wide dynamic range ensuring that Prokofiev's dramatic contrasts make their full powerful effect.

Dance Duets

"Immortal Pas de Deux." Adam arr. Jacob : *Giselle* — Waltz, Act 1. Chopin arr. Douglas : *Les Sylphides* — Waltz, Op. 64, No. 2. Delibes : *Sylvia* — Violin Solo, Act 3. Tchaikovsky : *The Nutcracker* — *Pas de Deux,* Act 3. Minkus arr. Irving : *Don Quixote* — *Pas de Deux.* Rossini-Respighi : *La Boutique Fantasque* — Can Can. Prokofiev : *Romeo and Juliet* — *Pas de Deux,* Act 1. Tchaikovsky : *The Sleeping Beauty* — *Pas de Deux,* Act 3. Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (Robert Irving). HMV CLP 1239. 12 in. 35*s.* 10*d.*

THIS record should prove as popular as the similar collections of "love duets from the operas" which are all the rage at the moment with opera collectors.

The items have been well chosen from the point of view of musical variety, though Irving's sound, routine direction lacks the fullness of phrasing, tender expressiveness and *éclat* that would evoke vivid memories of the dancing of the famous artists mentioned in Pigeon Crowle's sleeve-note. On the credit side, however, the tempi are generally well-judged, the actual playing of a high standard, and the recording bright and clear, if a trifle shallow.

The excerpt from the first act of *Giselle* is more generous than the listing on the sleeve suggests, for it includes in addition to the Waltz (which is strictly a *ballabile*), the *Allegro louré* music for the Giselle-Albrecht *pas de deux.* Minkus's much-maligned music for the *Don Quixote* display-piece is given complete. *The Nutcracker* excerpt consists only of the opening *Andante maestoso* section for the actual *pas de deux* without the solo variations and coda ; but the "Aurora" *pas de deux* is followed by the ballerina's solo and, rather oddly, the "Three Ivans" coda (which most people will think of as a character *pas de trois*).

The Balcony Scene excerpt from *Romeo and Juliet* begins with the *pas de deux* proper, starting at a later point than Mitropoulos's performance of the scene on the Philips disc also reviewed this month, and beside which Irving's account pales by comparison.

Russia and Spain

Rimsky-Korsakov : *Capriccio Espagnol.* Prokofiev : Overture on Hebrew Themes. Liadov : *Kikimora. The Enchanted Lake. A Musical Snuff-Box. Baba Yaga.* Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (Efrem Kurtz). HMV ALP 1632. 12 in. 41*s.* 8½*d.*

ANATOL LIADOV (1855-1914), an interesting minor Russian composer whose music was much admired by Diaghilev, was originally to have composed *The Firebird,* but was so slow in making a beginning that the commission was given to Stravinsky instead.

Of the Liadov works played on this record, the three symphonic poems — *Kikimora, The Enchanted Lake* and *Baba Yaga* — made up the greater part of the score for Massine's delightful ballet based on Russian folk-tales, *Contes Russes.* Kurtz handles these, and the quaint *Musical Snuff-Box,* with all the delicacy and care for atmospheric effect that one would expect, the same sensitivity extending to the performance of the rather slight Prokofiev overture.

Kurtz holds the abandon of *Capriccio Espagnol* in check, all the better to point the contrasts between the dances and to restore to the work a measure of authentic Spanish pride usually vulgarised in the general run of performances.

The well-balanced, colourful recording reproduces the playing with superb realism.

PAS DE DEUX : *This striking photograph forms the cover-design for the sleeve of the new HMV record,* Immortal Pas de Deux. *It was taken by ballet-photographer Houston Rogers, and was specially posed for him by Festival Ballet dancers Dianne Richards and Ivan Baptie, seen (left) in another of the series of photographs he took from which the cover picture was chosen. Robert Irving conducts the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in performances of well-known "love-duets in dance".*

Lydia Kyasht

1885—1959

The last photograph taken of Lydia Kyasht six months before she died. She is seen in her garden in North London.

A VERY wide circle of ballet lovers must have been deeply grieved to learn of the death of Lydia Kyasht on January 12. Born in St. Petersburg on March 25, 1885, she studied at the Imperial School under Gerdt, the famous mime, and appeared in some of Petipa's last works. It is important to record that she was the first Russian ballerina to come to England, preceding as she did Pavlova's first public appearance.

To those who were fortunate enough to know her she was the embodiment of a generous personality, sympathy and kindness. It is interesting to recall that when she first arrived here nearly 51 years ago, "wretched and homesick" as she wrote, the only English word she knew was "theatre". With no friends to whom she could talk, she rather gave some of her fellow dancers the impression that she was hard and cold. "But later," wrote Phyllis Bedells in *My Dancing Days,* "when we knew her better, and she had become used to us, we found that this was very far from being true."

The most remarkable feature of her long career is that it was free of those vicious intrigues and savage incidents which make such irresistible copy for the biographer and historian. Naturally she had her disagreements, and with such personalities as Diaghilev or Nijinsky, or the management of the Empire Theatre, but these were quickly mended and never tinged with spitefulness.

Lydia Kyasht possessed a dignified charm and a lively sense of humour. She was firmly independent in her judgment, and while she could be both stubborn and temperamental, she was never unreasonable. Her burning sincerity and quick sympathy with the other dancer's point of view gave her the friendship of even those who could have been her rivals.

Among her fellow pupils at the Imperial School were Pavlova and Karsavina. Karsavina and she were lifelong friends, and when she made her professional début in 1902 it was Pavlova who introduced her to the audience and presented her with a bouquet of red roses. "Among real artists," wrote Kyasht in her autobiography, "real jealousy does not exist" : an attitude exemplified by the christening ceremony of her daughter, Lydia, in 1921, at which Pavlova and Genée became the child's godparents.

She was a person of remarkable vigour, and although her health began to fail two years ago, she was still remarkably active until the time of her death. I remember her saying, while resting after her first illness, that she felt positively selfish and furious with herself for not being able to teach and continue to share her knowledge with our present generaton of dancers. Then, she imagined, it would only be a matter of weeks before she would be back in the classroom.

On the Saturday before she died she was visited by her old friend, Marie Rambert, and on the very day before her death by her very close colleague, Phyllis Bedells. She was bright and cheerful and so enamoured of the latter's new hat that she begged her to buy one exactly the same for her.

Phyllis Bedells, at whose studio she so often taught, recalls with gratitude the charming mime classes she gave. But what must remain most warmly in her students' minds is the way in which she made the old Russian ballets live for them. Teaching at Anna Northcote's studio, while Miss Northcote was on leave, it was quite usual for *variations* from such works as *Paquita* to suddenly come back to her. Whereupon she would suddenly jump up and teach them with unrestrained passion. An assessment of her work as a teacher can be read in *Dance and Dancers,* April 1957.

She had a remarkable facility for inventing attractive danceable *enchaînements* and her classes were always extremely popular. I must say that I occasionally met the odd dancer who felt, rather curiously, that because Kyasht's classes were so enjoyable that they really couldn't be good for one. She was never half-hearted in her enthusiasm for the excellent and she was always deeply concerned about the expressive qualities of movement. Her loss to British ballet will be incalculable.

Her Career

LYDIA KYASHT graduated as a First Dancer at the Imperial Theatre in St. Petersburg in 1907. She always claimed that she was the first dancer to perform Fokine's *La Mort du Cygne* which she danced at a special matinée organised in aid of soldiers who had been wounded in the Russo-Japanese war.

She made her début here at the old Empire Theatre in Leicester Square on August 17, 1908. Phyllis Bedells described her as being as pretty as a china doll, but remarked that at first everyone was appalled by the very short tutu she wore.

She was an immediate success and her name soon became as closely associated with the rôle of Sylvia as Genée's had been earlier with Swanilda. On her performance in this condensed one-act version of *Sylvia, The Times* (May 19, 1911) wrote : "We have never seen Mlle Lydia Kyasht at once so dramatic and so secure in the mastery of the very difficult displays of pure dancing which she gave. Her *pirouettes* especially roused the audience to great enthusiasm."

Until her arrival in England, choreography was a word never used and little care was taken in assembling the steps. "However," Phyllis Bedells writes, "Kyasht's choreography was as fine as the best we see today. She brought us the classical style and, like other Russians, she taught from her memory of what had been danced in the great theatres of her homeland."

It is also important to stress that ballet had degenerated in England until the arrival of Genée and Kyasht. Kyasht herself acknowledges Genée's great contribution in her book *Romantic Recollections.* Although the Empire Theatre amounted to little more than an elaborate music hall, lavish ballets were staged in its revues. By making ballet appeal to the general public, Genée and Kyasht not only helped to restore dance to its former eminence here, but they prepared the way for the success of the Diaghilev Company.

Kyasht also danced in America (1914) and appeared with the Diaghilev Company at the Alhambra and on the Continent. Among her many celebrated partners were Nijinsky, Bolm, Volinine, Vladimiroff and Dolin, and in the mid-thirties she appeared in the play *Ballerina* with Anton Dolin. As recently as 1939, she formed her own company, the Ballet de la Jeunesse, which gave intermittent seasons in London and the Provinces.

E. C. Mason.

Phyllis Bedells writes:

IT is with deep sorrow that I offer a sincere tribute to my dear friend, Lydia Kyasht.

Kyasht was the first of the Russian dancers to take London by storm. She came to the Empire Theatre in 1908, where Adeline Genée had reigned supreme for the previous ten years, and it certainly cannot have been easy for Kyasht to step into the shoes of such an illustrious favourite. That she was really good is proved by the fact that she won the affection and esteem of the Empire ballet public who had been so devoted to Genée.

With Adolf Bolm as her partner, she introduced the lovely *pas de deux* work from the Imperial Russian ballets with which we are now familiar. But, in those days, we did not realise what a great art it is, and how much hard study went into perfecting this work. I remember well that I, then only a child soloist, together with the rest of the Empire Company, thought the supported work less difficult than dancing alone. *Pirouettes,* lifts, and the lovely line of her *adage,* all looked so easy — which I now realise was proof of how well Kyasht danced.

Sunday Ballet Club Answers Back

In the January issue of Dance and Dancers, **Peter Jay, former Production Manager of Sunday Ballet Club, wrote an article** — Whither Sunday Ballet Club — **in which he criticised certain aspects of the organisation. Here JIM RANGER, present Director of the club, gives his reply.**

IN his article on the future of the Sunday Ballet Club, Peter Jay diagnosed its main present weakness as absence of expert artistic direction. There was no one, he said, competent to select ballets ; no one competent to direct their productions ; and this being so the Club was unlikely to achieve the high artistic standard desirable. Other critics have commented upon the lack of experiment in the Club's programmes ; on the unsuitability of certain ballets shown ; in short, on the absence of any strong directing personality.

It must be admitted at once that there is no official of the Club capable of performing the sort of duties which Peter Jay thinks necessary as effectively as his suggested Director of Productions "with a high reputation in the ballet world". It must also be admitted that the Club has produced no Diaghilev. The question is whether these deficiencies are really regrettable.

In order to answer this question one must understand what the Sunday Ballet Club is and what it aspires to do. The Club presents evenings of new ballets staged and danced by professionals. It is, however, essentially an organisation directed by amateurs. This, Jay suggests, is its weakness. But it is also in many ways its strength. The Sunday Ballet Club came into being because the various excellent organisations sponsored by the professional ballet companies to present the works of relatively inexperienced choreographers had ceased to function. The ballet audience, or some enthusiastic members of it, decided to fill the vacuum. Thus although the Sunday Ballet Club depends on the help and friendship of the ballet professionals it is the result of an independent initiative and has been run by amateurs.

In many ways, some of them indicated by Peter Jay, this has made it easier to fulfil the aims of the Club, which are, as he says, "to provide opportunities for young and untried choreographers".

The ballet audience is, as ballet professionals know only too well, committed to no one company nor to any balletic dogma. No more is the Club. It is eclectic, not doctrinaire. It does not wish to become a slickly competent provider of "establishment" fare : nor does it wish its evenings to bear the impress of the taste of one personality ; nor does it wish to become a dedicated pressure group waging war for one particular concept of ballet. If any of these things happened no doubt the Club would be able to produce a more pleasurable evening in the theatre. No doubt also the Club, in narrowing its aims, would have a more marked influence.

But although, as Jay argues, the Club owes a duty to the audience whose support maintains it, it would be quite wrong to suppose that the primary task is to entertain it. After all, this audience is drawn from members of the Club who share in its intention to foster new choreography. To this end, they are prepared, if need be, to sacrifice unity of programme and professional expertise. They are, and should be, content "to hope for the occasional miracle".

A "miracle" is a happy expression, for the essence of the miraculous is the unexpected. The miraculous may come from any direction : an impressive work from any of the schools of ballet. The miraculous may come, also, out of a choreographic idea which the expert would at once dismiss as impracticable.

The Club is very grateful for the interest so far shown and the advice so far given by its distinguished patrons. In the future we hope to make fuller use of professional advice in selecting ballets, but we mean to preserve our amateur eclectism of approach.

We must turn now to the problem of the guidance to be given by the Club to a choreographer once his work is selected. Here, surely we are right to maintain the principle that it is for the choreographers themselves to establish their own styles and that our only rôle is to see that the choreographers are helped to make the most of their ideas and ability. We have attempted in the past and will even more strenuously attempt in the future to help the choreographers know whether or not his intended effects are being realised. Here again, while the advice of our patrons and other professional mentors is indispensable, the reaction of the officials of the Club as a cross-section of the potential audience is of no little value to the choreographer.

In conclusion, it must be emphasised that financial considerations play as great a rôle as artistic in the functioning of the Club. If we had greater resources we could afford to mount all ballets with the elaboration Peter Jay desires. We could afford to arrange, if practicable, that all ballets considered for production could be seen performed in practice costumes before any decision was taken upon them. At the moment, however, the Club loses up to £200 on each performance given, and such a loss presents us with considerable financial problems. One could put it this way. It is not so much, as Peter Jay suggests, that the Club needs to attract larger and richer audiences, as that it needs the support of all ballet lovers who desire to encourage choreography.

MONTE CARLO BALLET

Continued from page 12

people playing in an orchestra pit destroys the atmosphere of fantasy. Nevertheless the power of this work does not diminish, and it is splendidly danced by the company and especially by Béjart as the Young Man used as a medium, and by Michèle Seigneuret as the woman who uses both the boy and the power from electric pylons to make predictions and miraculous cures.

All these modern works went over well with most of the Monte Carlo audience, who greeted them with applause far warmer than is their wont. But afterwards it was brought to my notice that a few voices were raised in protest though these voices were not so raised in public places. It is here, as I pointed out earlier in this article, that Monte Carlo faces a problem. It is a gambling resort which, during its winter months, is mainly supported by the more aged in their search for escape from the rigours of winter in other places. It is undoubtedly these people who keep the place going, and the aged are less prone to accept new ideas ; a reflection of life today, especially in its less pleasant aspects, is a part of what they are escaping from. Possibly ballets like the Vienna company's *Hôtel Sacher* is all that they require for their edification.

On the other hand, since the days of Diaghilev, Monte Carlo has built up a name for presenting all the best that the world has to offer in the way of ballet manifestations. Apart from the major dance capitals of the world, the Monte Carlo theatre is one of the most important dance centres in existence.

Ballet, if it is not just going to get bogged down into some old rut, is bound to reflect the trends of thought of the time — and it is unfortunate for the old ladies of Monte Carlo that our time is not a particularly attractive one and many of its facets are downright ugly. Our painters, composers, writers and choreographers have managed to weave poetry out of this ugliness, and the whole status of the art of ballet has been raised because it recognises this significant fact. Had ballet continued just to be pretty frothy toe-dancing, it would have remained a very minor art.

Outside the principality of Monaco, the world of ballet has reason to be grateful to the administrators of these ballet seasons for keeping ahead of and abreast with the times. It would be a tragedy if these older people, some of whom have a certain influence in the principality, were to carry the day and relegate ballet to merely becoming an innocuous way of passing the time between dinner and a mild flutter at the tables. It is a problem which the Monte Carlo Theatre's administrators have always with them. But it should never be forgotten that the Diaghilev ballet was responsible for many creations in this theatre, some of which undoubtedly shocked the sensibilities of the old ladies of that time, and which have gone on to become great masterpieces. If Diaghilev had paid any heed to a few outraged utterances, the world would be a very much poorer place today.

DANSES CONCERTANTES

Continued from page 20

cast which appeared to understand and even love every nuance wanted by the choreographer. MacMillan was "first attracted to Lane by her musicality" and in this ballet she did not put a foot wrong. Her individual sophistication and confident precision were completely admirable. But the rest of the cast gave performances almost equally rewarding. David Poole went through the ballet like a mournful Picasso *saltimbanque* and Donald Britton danced his solo with exhilarating verve and *brio*. The other soloists, Sara Neil, Annette Page and Gilbert Vernon, were also excellent, and the entire cast showed — as no other Royal Ballet cast has yet shown — just how a Stravinsky neo-classical score should be danced. Later casts have revealed Sara Neil and Donald MacLeary as very distinguished in the Lane and Poole rôles, while Lane's part has also been taken by Maureen Bruce, and both Gilbert Vernon and Michael Boulton have been seen in the Britton rôle.

THE ROYAL BALLET (I) at Covent Garden

Three Beauties

Three performances of The Sleeping Beauty **with Nerina and Blair on January 8, Beriosova and Ashbridge on January 21, and Linden and Blair on January 23.**

WHEN we wrote in the January issue naming Nadia Nerina as the dancer of the year and said that her new spirit in dancing was as though "a sleeping beauty had started to awake," I don't think that even clairvoyant us had quite pictured just how quickly she was going to wake up. It was a new Nerina that appeared in *The Sleeping Beauty* on January 8.

Pavlova it was who said that after acquiring technical perfection it should be forgotten. Perhaps Nerina remembered this when she started to forget that she was a technical queen and concentrated on her interpretation. In the past she has come on and given a correct exhibition of the steps, or rather a correct realisation of what Sergeyev remembered of Petipa, showed a fine display of technique but she was merely Nerina dancing a rôle which was very little different from Sylvia or Odette. Suddenly she has acquired an awareness of her surroundings — she comes on and she really is a princess enjoying her sixteenth birthday. She is softer, she reacts to situations and expresses emotions; her technique, always prodigious, has at last found expression. I don't know what has caused this unless it was her association with Bolshoi artist Fadeyechev when they worked together on the TV *Giselle* recently, but whatever it is the transformation is quite remarkable. Her vision scene was quite outstanding and she was splendidly partnered by Blair who has himself lost some of his old brashness and achieved a more Romantic approach and appearance. In this scene they indulged in a couple of Bolshoi lifts, never before seen from any Royal Ballet artists at Covent Garden. Where they differ from the Bolshoi is that they use these lifts in the right place — a vision after all should be slightly airborne — and never to excess. If there was a slight falling off in the last act *pas de deux,* it might have been brought upon by fatigue or by the orchestra *tempi.* But all in all this was one of the most exciting performances of *The Sleeping Beauty* seen at the Opera House for some time. The excitement of it was contagious because the company responded and carried the whole long ballet through with gusto.

When Beriosova took over the Aurora rôle a few nights later, and almost on the eve of her own wedding, she had little help from a rather lethargic company and deadly orchestral playing. None the less she shone out like a jewel from this rather dim environment. She should never be compared with Nerina or Fonteyn because her performance is on a rather different scale and more full of Russian grandeur but, like both these artists, much of the power of her performance comes from her appearing to belong in her surroundings. The high-spots came in the vision scene also with a magnificently danced variation and by ending the *pas de deux* with a glorious Russian *arabesque.* She was competently partnered by Bryan Ashbridge, less good than in a previous *Le Lac des Cygnes* and in a far too pale make-up, whose last act variation was very pedestrian.

Linden, as Aurora two nights later, still has a long way to go. She has improved decidedly and her musical phrasing is no longer erratic, she looks beautiful but she still has to think about her interpretation. At the moment she still needs awakening but judging by her gradual and slow development, this may take some time — we must be patient. Physically she has all that it takes and it was possible to believe in her as a young Princess at her birthday but I got the feeling that she does not yet believe in herself — and that is what turns a dancing display into a performance. Blair partnered manfully and once or twice saved her from disaster, specially in the last act *fish dives* but I did not get the feeling of accord that was so apparent when he danced with Nerina.

Next month I shall have more to say about the dancing of the supporting rôles at these performances.

P. W.

Reading The Will

THERE was a beautifully cosy atmosphere to the Press Conference at Covent Garden on January 8. It had been called to announce the publication of the Royal Opera House's first Annual Report. Raised on an impromptu dais at one end of the Crush Bar were Lord Drogheda (Chairman of the Board of Directors) looking urbane and distinguished, David Webster (General Administrator), looking urbane and glistening, Dame Ninette de Valois looking just a teeny bit harassed, Professor Lionel Robbins (Member of the Board), and Douglas P. Lund, the Chief Accountant. In front of this imposing little group were ranged rows and rows of chairs, filled by nearly every music and ballet critic, journalist and gossip columnist you could lay your tongue to, and one or two you couldn't. We were like one great big happy family gathered together to hear the reading of the will.

In the course of the introductory speeches and the later very gentlemanly cross-questioning (so English!) Lord Drogheda said, with simple feudal dignity, that he would like to see another row of chandeliers around the Opera House at balcony level, while Mr. Webster, with the eager air of a Prime Minister, approaching election day, democratically announced that *he* would like to see the gallery re-seated. Dame Ninette smiled a benign, wan smile, but said nothing.

What clearly, but not unexpectedly, emerged from the Conference — and also, in greater detail, from the Report — was that Covent Garden is limping along in a precarious state of genteel poverty, nearly, but never quite, making both of its modest ends meet. It was therefore encouraging to learn from Lord Drogheda that the Arts Council Grant might in future be paid as a fixed percentage of expenditure. This move, foreshadowed by Lord Drogheda, was officially announced in the Commons by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury on January 23, when it was said that the Arts Council would provide "43 per cent. of its expenditure as approved by the Arts Council subject to an overriding maximum of £500,000." This arrangement will give Covent Garden £450,000 this year, but it is worth bearing in mind that Lord Drogheda and his colleagues mention the figure of "around £500,000" for safety. The general Arts Council Grant has been increased "to enable the Council to give this additional assistance to Covent Garden without curtailing its other activities."

The Report itself, an attractively produced booklet, is on sale at Covent Garden for a shilling, and a very good bob's worth it is. Apart from giving extremely full financial details of income and expenditure since the formation of the organisation as present constituted in 1950, it also gives details and statistics of the performances and casts during the past financial year ending on March 31, 1958.

Not having a very mathematical turn of mind it was to these statistics that my eye first strayed, and I noticed quite a few discrepancies among the details given for the various ballet performances. I mention this partly because I fear that future historians may perhaps be tempted to place too much weight upon the accuracy of these deatils, and partly because even minor errors in this kind of document throw an unfortunate light upon the whole thing.

For example, looking at the details they give for *Giselle,* I see that they have omitted to note that Giselle and Albrecht were danced by Susan Alexander and Alexander Bennett, Myrthe has been performed by Margaret Lee, and I seem to recall a dancer called Brian Shaw making one or two appearances in the Peasant *pas de deux*! This is rather unfortunate for a publication seeking to list all the alternative casts, but one would have thought that they would have got the actual number of performances of each individual ballet during the period correct, yet *Hamlet* is said to have had only one performance, whereas it had two, *Solitaire* (spelt *Solitarie* here) had four performances and not three.

The figures themselves tend to fly over my head, yet I was surprised to find that the new production of *Swan Lake,* first produced on December 18, 1952, with entirely new scenery and substantially fresh costumes by Leslie Hurry, was mysteriously produced free of charge. I say this because in Table 5 listing the costs of each production (who would have thought without thought that *Petrushka* cost slightly more than *Prince of the Pagodas*?) there is no entry for *Swan Lake* for the year 1952/3, nor in any other year. There is a small annual entry for "sundry general expenses" which presumably pays for such things as renewals of costumes, etc., yet I can hardly think that a major new production like the 1952 *Swan Lake* could be swallowed in this way. There is probably some simple explanation, yet I find it at the moment oddly disquieting.

It has always struck me that the most disappointing thing about Balance Sheets is the way they monotonously succeed in balancing. and this one is no exception. One will look in vain for signs of gross extravagance or wilful folly. I pointed out to a friend that Covent Garden was the only opera house in the world to submit its accounts to public scrutiny in this way, and he replied that they were the only opera house in the world that dared.

So, dull as it may be, there are no signs in these chaste figures of orgies or mishandlings, leaving one to derive what interest one can from speculating on how the cloakrooms, which showed a profit of £265 in 1957, managed to make a loss of £57 in 1958; or wondering who the kind soul was who donated £1 to the Opera House coffers during 1958, and noticing, just a little less flippantly, that while the

Opera House can afford to give £500 to the Opera School Ltd., it pays not one penny towards the upkeep of the Royal Ballet School.

And that last is perhaps typical of a marked trend in this entire financial statement. Quite often, or so it seems, opera is calling the tune while ballet is paying the piper. For example, let us look at the production costs, which are incidentally a much smaller part of total expenditure than one might have thought.

However, over the past eight years Covent Garden has produced 29 operas at a total cost of £334,484, and 27 ballets at a total cost of £114,938. During this time 1,958,793 people have paid £1,157,740 for 1,062 performances of ballet, while 1,749,799 people have paid £1,103,059 for 1,093 performances of opera. These, of course, are just figures for the Royal Opera House. Both the Opera and the Ballet have toured, the Ballet giving 392 performances in the Provinces which showed a clear profit of £8,039, while during the same period the Opera Company has given 429 performances which have netted a total *loss* of £206,787.

On their rare visits overseas the Opera Company has been far more successful, giving performances in Paris (two, I think), Rhodesia and Wiesbaden, and showing a total loss of only £56. The Ballet has also done a certain amount of overseas touring, and showed a profit of £294,506 — a sum which must have proved very useful in making opera an economic proposition in the Provinces, as well as leaving a little nest-egg over to pay for one or two productions. The salary bill at Covent Garden for the artists, excluding orchestra, comes to getting on for £350,000, which is not split up in the Report. However, at the Conference Lord Drogheda said that the Ballet accounted for nearly £100,000 per year of this figure, so the company can take some satisfaction in hearing that they are possibly the highest paid ballet troupe outside America, with an average of £800 p.a. for each dancer.

Two things emerge from this mass of figures. The first is that Covent Garden has not got enough money to meet its total commitments. The second is that the ballet company appears to have felt the force of the resultant financial stringency rather more than has the opera. There are some people who are saying that the ballet actually subsidises the opera, but when so much of the theatre's expenditure goes on shared "services" such as rent, building maintenance, orchestra and administration, the ballet clearly derives a good deal of benefit from working with the opera.

Yet it is equally certain that this benefit is nothing like so great as that enjoyed by the opera from working with the ballet. Any fool can realise that opera is a more expensive art than ballet, but ballet even so has its needs. It would be folly indeed to try to economise on a ballet company which has won a place second to none in the Western world, merely to benefit an opera company whose international standing is somewhat more modest. The Directors of Covent Garden should wake up to the fact that in this country through national temperament, inclination and aptitude, the ballet company is the senior partner among the two lyric theatre arts, and balance their books accordingly.

Also-ran Cinderellas

THE second pair of Covent Garden's quartet of Cinderellas proved somewhat disappointing after the exemplary performances given earlier in the season by Fonteyn and Beriosova. Anya Linden's performance on January 7 had plenty of elfin charm but little distinction. It was always neatly, and at times even beautifully, acted — her fleeting glance of wonderment as she looked at the Prince's palace for the first time was especially memorable — yet her dancing, more on beat than it once was, seemed

NERINA AND BLAIR in the pas de deux *from the last act of* The Sleeping Beauty *which ended their concert at the Royal Albert Hall.*

Photo : Seymour Grey.

staccato in its phrasing, and some of the choreography, such as the running *pas de bourrées* in the first act, gave her more difficulty than it should.

Difficulties hardly existed for Nadia Nerina when she took over the rôle on January 15, but here again the performance was tinged with disappointment. For this was not the dazzling "new" Nerina — who *everyone* seems to be discovering these days — but much more like the old one, immaculate, beautiful and excitingly unexciting. After the thrillingly alive performances she had earlier given in *Giselle* and *Sleeping Beauty* this came as an anti-climax. However, to judge from her appearance at the Albert Hall only a week or so later, this relapse into merely superb competence was probably temporary.

Both Linden and Nerina were partnered by David Blair, who made a brash and assertive Prince, dancing his solo with notable finesse and flourish, and partnering gallantly, yet perhaps a shade too self-consciously. It was most encouraging to see him restored to the form he lost just before his Australian trip — he looked as though the Antipodes sun had benefited him considerably more than it did those M.C.C. cricketers.

The Sleeping Beauty on the afternoon of January 10 was particularly notable for the svelte grace and fine authority of Georgina Parkinson as the Lilac Fairy, and the unexpected début of Gary Burne as the Blue Bird. Taking the rôle over at short notice, through the illness of both Shaw and Clegg, Burne made a good first attempt which managed to show most of his virtues and his faults. He looked well in the costume, and danced with elevation, strength and aplomb. His finish left a lot to be desired, and his badly pointed feet and somewhat ragged turns detracted from the total impression. **C. B.**

AN EVENING OF BALLET

NADIA NERINA and DAVID BLAIR with the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by John Hollingsworth, at the Royal Albert Hall on January 25.

THE first of these programmes given in the Autumn proved so popular that it was decided to repeat the dose. Originally Nerina was supposed to appear with John Gilpin, but owing to various circumstances that fell through, Nerina again danced with her regular Royal Ballet partner, David Blair.

There is something slightly disconcerting about these concerts of ballet music with dance interludes because the spectator has to switch from his aural to his visual appreciation in such a short space of time. The result is he finds himself longing for movement when the orchestra is playing on its own — and it is amazing how dull some ballet music can be without the visual spectacle for which it was written. Admittedly some of the playing was very sluggish, which did not help matters. In excerpts from Stravinsky's *The Firebird* it was impossible not to compare it with the miraculous performance which Stravinsky himself got from the orchestra at his recent Festival Hall concert, and the *tempi* in some *Swan Lake* excerpts were slow even by present Covent Garden standards — and you all know how slow that can be ! It was the orchestra that took up the main body of this programme because in all the two dancers cannot have appeared for more than half an hour in the whole evening.

There is a special technique for ballet concerts and I think that Nadia Nerina is the only British ballerina to have discovered the real secret. It is simply no use appearing on a concert platform without scenery or *corps* and with a background of black-coated orchestra players, and giving the same sort of performance that you would give in a theatre with all the usual trappings. Extreme virtuosity and the ability to alter the composition of the dance so that it can be seen in the round (the audience are often seated on all sides) are the first essentials. In the theatre, owing to the fact that the audience are only in front of you, it is often possible to cheat ; in the concert hall it is not.

I would say that both Nerina and Blair have studied all these differences because

they gave what I consider to be the best possible sort of presentation under the unsympathetic circumstance. They were brilliant without ever being flashy or vulgar. Opening with the *Don Quixote pas de deux,* they gave a splendid account of themselves. I don't know who was responsible for the arrangement but it was different to any I have seen before and included some most exciting Bolshoi lifts. Nerina's piquant variation was crisp and clean, and danced with slight, but not exagerrated, coquetry ; a lovely piece of *allegro* work. Blair's solo was danced with the easy perfection of an Eglevsky. Lately he seems to have been working on his turns, which are now possibly the best in British ballet.

In the second half of the programme they started by each giving a solo. Blair's solo — the Miller's farruca from Falla's *The Three-Cornered Hat* — was a mistake. This dance, which Massine originally created for himself, is unsuited to Blair's qualities. He seemed heavy and lumpish where a cat-like grace and agility are called for. Although it is often said, usually correctly, that nobody can follow Massine in his own rôles, I can remember one British dancer, Harold Turner, achieving a remarkably good imitation of Massine's sinuous quality when the ballet was revived at Covent Garden after the war. But even if it is possible for British dancers to give passable performances of this Russo-Hispanised solo, Blair would be well advised to think up some other dance for concert performances.

I inwardly groaned when I read in my programme that Nerina was going to dance *Le Cygne* of Saint-Saëns. After Pavlova's unforgettable performance, it has been the downfall of too many ballerinas, Galina Ulanova included. But the public demands it mainly because they think that they are somehow going to evoke Pavlova — poor things, they are often unaware of the fact that although they are hearing the same music and seeing some of the same steps and a replica of Madame's costume, they are, in fact, witnessing a pitiful travesty of the solo which mainly caused Pavlova to encircle the globe so triumphantly so many times.

But when we have established the fact that Nerina is not Pavlova she gave a very touching portrait of the wounded swan drifting down a river to fold its wings in death. Even her arms, one of the less satisfactory elements of Nerina's work, were more controlled and expressive than usual. The arrangement, I believe by Cleo Nordi, is good, and some features of the dance, omitted by many ballerinas, have been restored.

To end the evening, both dancers gave what the programme called the *Aurora Pas de Duex.* It was possibly less well danced than the *Don Quixote pas de deux,* mainly on account of the uncomfortable position of the orchestra and the fact that the conductor had to turn round all the time, but it was exciting nevertheless. They used the coda (the music most people think of as being for the *Three Ivans* and which some critics still think was written by Tchaikovsky for the jolly trio of coachmen) and finished up with yet another Bolshoi lift as a gesture of triumph. **P. W.**

TELEVISION

CIRCE

Given in Independent Television's Chelsea At Nine **on January 15. Music,** Poems In Brass **by J. J. Johnson and Woody Herman. Choreography, Manfred Taubert. Production, Wendy Toye.**

GISELLE DEEGE
WOLFGANG LEISTNER

I ASSUME that the choreographer is in debt to Homer for his theme, although the narration, "Girl meets boy, boy falls in love with girl, girl enslaves boy," is probably from the pen of some lesser poet.

As Giselle Deege has quite a reputation in Berlin, it is only fair to presume that her best work is probably a lot better than she indicated in this performance. Sad to relate, there was no depth, no breadth of outlook, or point, in this hackwork choreography. The emotional content was spread a little too thickly, and Deege gave what must be termed a strong performance. She ogled, squinted and leered, preened herself provocatively and demonstrated her high extensions when convenient. Wolfgang Leistner, an ex-pupil of Cléo Nordi, capered about her exactly like the Deer in *Symphonie Fantastique.* And he seemed to find her voluptuosities easy to resist, although he finally collapsed obediently.

MONA INGLESBY

In dances from The Sleeping Beauty **given in** The 1959 Show **on Independent Television on January 22. Produced by Joan Kemp-Welch.**

THE televising on this occasion was more a triumph of arty technical effects than inspired camera direction. Whether Mona Inglesby's diffused image was seen through a net of roses or imposed on a background of flickering stars, she looked deliciously morning fresh and chic. But despite Joan Kemp-Welch's very reassuring direction, her performance can best be described as one of dedicated and pleasant efficiency. Technique — the speed and crispness necessary for the Fairy of the Song Birds *variation* — is a matter of mechanical perfection, but the end-product must look anything but mechanical.

Also in the programme one had the opportunity of seeing some of Denys Palmer's choreography for a modern dance team. This was generally very pleasant and full of verve without being over-inventive.

E. C. M.

A HARLEQUINADE

Presented by the Players' Theatre at the Lyric Opera House Hammersmith. Choreography : Denys Palmer. Music, Mendelssohn, arranged by Peter Greenwell. Décors and costumes by Reginald Woolley.

AS an epilogue to their production of Planchés *King Charming,* a genuine Victorian pantomime, the Players' Theatre presented a *Harlequinade* in the same tradition. It would be overrating the production to pretend that it was a masterpiece of any kind. The casting, which was uneven, showed that the dancers clearly held the balance of power, there were occasional lapses in team-work, and there could have been more subtlety of gesture, especially from the actors. But even with its blemishes it was the best example of mime combined with dance that I have seen staged by an English group.

Denys Palmer's choreography was pleasant, unpretentious, unexacting for the dancers, and exclusively classical, and all the more appropriate for these qualities. There are similar virtues in his production for he has avoided the obvious temptation of presenting this *Harlequinade* as a satire on the original.

Jeanne Lusby's charm and infectious gaiety were much in character for Columbine. Her partner, Graham Smith, as Harlequin, brought to his acting and excellent dancing alike a spontaneity which gave the illusion of joyous improvisation. Seamus Gordon as Pantaloon projected this long-suffering figure of fun without the usual exaggerated grimaces, and he deserves special praise for his excellent delicately blended make-up. Joyce Gearing and Joy Carter as the Goose and Bird respectively also gave clever impersonations.

E. C. M.

Dance and Dancers . . . . ABROAD

FRANCE

THE PARIS OPERA

AT two gala performances on December 25 and 31, Yvette Chauviré danced again in *Divertissement, Le Cygne* and *Les Mirages,* which were memorable for the intense poetic feeling she brought to them. Let us hope that the promise of these final performances of the year — following as they did an extremely dull season — is fulfilled in 1959.

Following an absence of eight years, Tamara Toumanova made her comeback on January 14 in *Phèdre* by Lifar and Cocteau. She created this rôle on June 14, 1950, and her reappearance in it has proved a wise choice. Its tragic atmosphere is perfectly suited to her natural intensity, and although one could find fault with a certain monotony in her sensual paroxysms, her conception of the character is very satisfactory. Wan and emaciated, Toumanova is the personification of Phèdre's tragic destiny. From the purely technical aspect — of secondary interest in this work — she has kept her ability to sustain the most difficult balances. Partnering her, Youly Algaroff gave a sensitive interpretation of the sullen and fearful Hippolyte, while Josette Amiel endowed Aricie with a youthful grace and tenderness.

The company, stirred on by the performances of Claire Motte, Jacqueline Rayet, Francine Collement and Lucien Duthoit, gave a brilliant performance of *Etudes.* Liane Daydé has triumphed over the exciting principal rôle and appears to be at the peak of her talents in it. Moreover, she has substituted sharpness and verve for her habitual fragility. Peter Van Dijk displayed to the best advantage his dazzling *petite batterie* and his classical schooling in contrast to Michael Renault, who gave a somewhat unco-ordinated performance.

Dancing with Madeleine Lafon, Renault has however become considerably more expressive in *Nautéos,* in which it is a pleasure to see Chauviré again. As an imperious nymph she is a true daughter of the sea from the points of her majestic shoes to the rippling and gently abandoned movements of her arms. By totally different methods to those of the exquisite English Ondine, Margot Fonteyn, Chauviré succeeds likewise in suggesting vividly the fluid movement of water. The very least of her admirably studied gestures possesses a superiority of intelligence and harmony.

Heinz Rosen's *La Dame à la licorne,* which had been promised for more than a year, was finally staged on January 28. The

principal dancers are Daydé and Renault, and Claude Bessy takes the rôle for which Yvette Chauviré had previously been suggested. Marjorie Tallchief was also to have danced this rôle, but she has left for an extended tour of the United States with George Skibine.

THE OPERA- COMIQUE

IF our second national theatre is not always outstanding for the quality of its new works, at least it always has an agreeable vitality about it. Certainly among all the ballets recently added to its repertoire there is scarcely one that deserves to last. But experiments must be made. All we ask is that they should be a little more adventurous.

Besides Massine's *Boutique Fantasque* and *Capriccio Espagnol* and Skibine's original *Concerto, Les Fâcheuses Rencontres,* also by Skibine, and Jean-Bernard Lemoine's *Sinfonietta* have also been staged. Neither of these two latter works, however, succeeds in leaving the well-beaten track.

Les Fâcheuses Rencontres was originally produced for the Edinburgh Festival Ballet which premièred it on August 28, 1958, and here it is faithfully danced again by its creators. With her two victims, Max Bozzoni and George Skibine, Marjorie Tallchief is an amusing hotel thief. Though devoid of any choreographic brilliance, this minor work is enhanced by Alwyn Camble's 1912 décor, though somewhat less so by the costume he has designed for Tallchief which rather hinders her movements. Maurice Jarre's score also adds something to the work, although it is inferior to his previous compositions.

Passing over *Les Baladins,* a pale copy of *Les Forains,* danced by Monique Bianchi, Attilio Labis, and its choreographer, Michel Descombey, we must mention Descombey's *Le Clochard,* which had its first performance on January 9. The work also marked the jubilee of its composer, Albert Wolff. For approximately 50 years Albert Wolff has promoted the interests of French music not only by his work at the Opéra-Comique, but throughout the world. In the capacity of conductor he has too often effaced himself to permit us to discuss here the real value of his scores, which are always pleasant though occasionally a little insipid. In final effect it can be said that Michel Descombey has created a very personal work. Unhappily it lacks verve and any personality who can enhance the slightest gesture. The dream of his Tramp does not always ring true, and Micheline Grimoin, as the pure young girl, depicted in Pierre Wolff's scenario, is miscast. The anonymous décor and costumes are interesting : they are however not always suitable and are uneven in design, wavering between realism and fantasy.

The same programme enabled one to enjoy again the performances of Claude Bessy and Max Bozzoni in *Le Bel Indifférent* by Lifar and Cocteau, and the "Black Swan" *pas de deux.* In this latter work Liane Daydé combines a perverse charm with a remarkable sense of line and most praiseworthy continuity. Although out of its context, for once this *pas de deux* ceased to be exclusively a piece of bravura.

CARMEN AMAYA

FOLLOWING a long absence Carmen Amaya made a comeback at the Théâtre des Champs Elysées on January 5. She defies the ravages of time and still, luckily, possesses the extreme gauntness, thinness and "inner fire" which previously aroused such great enthusiasm. Her hands twist like flames, and while her finger-clicking and *zapateado* is more violent than subtle, it commands respect. Furthermore, she defies ridicule by her imperturbable assurance and the audacious contact she establishes with the audience.

Unfortunately, on this occasion, she is poorly supported, and the other items which act as a framework to her own vivid appearances are dull and unspectacular. However commendable the small company's teamwork may be, the lowering of tension is too violent when Amaya leaves the stage. Where are the days gone when one could discover such artists as Teresa, Luisillo, Roberto Iglesias and so many others among the performers supporting the stars?

In spite of her flamboyant personality, Carmen Amaya is unable to carry the weight of this production unaided. She must go and find in its native soil the worthwhile new dancers which this programme lacks. Nevertheless the performance is embellished by the guitarist, José Motos, who is more attractive through virtuosity than by pure Flamenco style.

NEWS IN BRIEF

LUDMILLA TCHERINA is working hard on rehearsals for her company's season, which is scheduled for February at the Théâtre Sarah-Bernhardt. Assisted by the Yugoslav choreographer, Dimitri Parlic, Jean Renoir is producing a ballet, *Le Feu aux poudres,* which recounts the rivalry between the warlike Strongolie and the peaceful Molvie. The décors have been designed by Jean Castanier, and among the dancers Tcherina has so far engaged are Milko Sparemblek and Vassili Sulich.

ACCOMPANIED by Dusanka Sifnios, Milorad Miskovitch and his company gave performances in Germany during January.

ROLAND PETIT has been working on a big production, based on *Cyrano de Bergerac,* which will be given at the Théâtre de l'Alhambra in March. Jeanmaire has agreed to star in Marcel Achard's new musical comedy *Patron* ; therefore Violette Verdy will be the principal dancer in Petit's new production. Roland Petit has also been invited to accept the post of *maître de ballet* at the Opéra-Comique.

THE Association française des Maîtres de danse classique has just been founded. Placed under the presidency of Serge Lifar, its honorary members include Carlotta Zambelli, Olga Preobrajenska, Lubov Egorova, Jeanne Schwarz, Albert Aveline and Gustave Ricaux.

IN the spring Paris is promised on the one hand the return of Maurice Béjart's company, and on the other the first appearance of Jerome Robbins' Company. It has also been announced that the Théâtre des Nations will present at the Théâtre Sarah-Bernhardt the Royal Swedish Ballet, the Warsaw Opera Ballet, folk-dance companies from India and Haiti and other groups.

ON January 9, Marcel Marceau presented a new programme at the Théâtre de l'Ambigu comprising of new Bib numbers, new exercises de style, and a revival of *Le Manteau.* For the spring he is planning a mime programme, *Paris qui rit, Paris qui pleure,* inspired by everyday life and the progress of science — especially space travel to the moon !

Marie-Françoise Christout.

BALLERINA BARDOT : Most people think of Brigitte Bardot as a pretty and pouting film star who has earned for herself the title of " sex-kitten ". But she originally trained as a dancer and in the left-hand picture she is seen when she was aged 13 and a pupil of Jeanne Schwarz at the Paris Conservatoire. Right, Bardot is being partnered by Michel Renault in a pas de deux *in a T.V. show given on New Year's Eve.*

Photos : Lido.

AMERICA

AS we go to press, dance is fermenting in all fields in America. The New York City Ballet has had the most exciting season in its history. Martha Graham's film, *Appalachian Spring,* has had its world première in Pittsburgh and she is currently working on the script for a new dance work. Doris Humphrey, one of the giants in the field of American modern dance, has passed away, leaving behind a philosophy and library of master-works that will enrich the future mainstream of dance in the United States. Ballerina Alexandra Danilova has proven herself the most exciting new talent in choreography to be represented at the Metropolitan Opera House in several seasons. Gene Kelly, though he proved a failure in his direction of the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, *Flower Drum Song,* partially redeemed himself with his Omnibus television programme, *Dancing — A Man's Game.* The Bolshoi Ballet, as might have been expected, has postponed its visit to America next April. However, as reported first and exclusively in *Dance and Dancers,* Jerome Robbins' Ballets U.S.A. is to be the first American company to appear in Moscow, and they open their engagement there on July 4, most probably with Nora Kaye as Guest Star. Ruth St. Denis, America's first lady of dance, has been awarded the largest financial grant ever given to a dance artist in the United States. Alvin Ailey, major young American-Negro dancer, was responsible for the formation and production of one of the most promising dance programmes of the mid-winter season. Charles Weidman, co-founder of the Humphrey-Weidman school, has returned to New York from Hollywood, to give master classes as well as for guest appearances with Katherine Litz, a former soloist with the Humphrey-Weidman Company.

THE NEW YORK CITY BALLET

THE New York City Ballet's ten-week season, which, incidentally, is part of its Tenth Anniversary celebration, also marks George Balanchine's twenty-fifth year in the United States as well as the quarter of a century mark for the School of American Ballet, which is, quite literally, the parent of this current company.

Four of its new works have already been reviewed elsewhere in this issue and last month. More important, perhaps, than any of the individual works of the season, however, has been the overall excellence of the company in its performances of the general repertoire. Particularly noteworthy has been Violette Verdy's personal triumphs in everything in which she has appeared. From the first night on, she has proven herself to be an exceptional Balanchine dancer. This has been especially true of her performances in *Symphony in C, Divertimento No. 15, Stars and Stripes, Western Symphony,* as well as in Birgit Cullberg's *Medea.* Melissa Hayden, similarly, in addition to her personal triumph in *Medea,* has been particularly outstanding in *Agon, Swan Lake, The Still Point* and *Orpheus.* It has also been wonderful to have Diana Adams back in the company again, and her performance in Balanchine's *Scotch Symphony* this season is the most beautiful and lyric within memory. And Allegra Kent, about whom a book could be written, continues to be one of the treasures of the company, always moving magnificently and performing glowingly.

George Balanchine's hour-long ballet, choreographed to the Anton Webern score, has been postponed to the company's May season, due to insufficient time for adequate rehearsal.

NEW YORK CITY BALLET EXHIBITION

THE New York Public Library has honoured the Tenth Anniversary of the New York City Ballet with a six-week exhibition tracing the history of the company back to its inception. Arranged by Marion Eames, former Editor of *Dance Index,* this showing contained original water colours, posters and souvenir programmes as well as photographs of the dancers. Lincoln Kirstein, director of the company, members of the company, the dance press and distinguished invited guests were on hand at the invitation preview where they were guests of the Friends of the Library's dance committee.

DANCE ON BROADWAY

FLOWER DRUM SONG, which is slated to be produced in London in the near future, is the long-awaited musical version of the novel of Chinese-American life in present-day San Francisco that was written by C. Y. Lee. The Broadway version has music by Richard Rodgers, lyrics by Oscar Hammerstein 2nd. With its overall direction in the hands of Gene Kelly and choreography by Carol Haney, one might indeed have expected something memorable. However, what resulted might well be titled "Hum Drum Song" for this is nothing but a routine, old-fashioned musical that is lacking in taste and creativity in every department. Its one saving grace is the enchanting Japanese actress, Miyoshi Umeki, who, typical to Broadway, is cast as a Chinese girl. She is eloquent, elegant and moves enchantingly. Kelly's staging and direction is dated and static and Carol Haney's choreography is, at its best, reminiscent. There is even a second act dream ballet (I thought we had outgrown these) that is not only completely predictable but, indeed, is rather hilarious in an unintentional way. Sadly enough a major dancer like Yuriko, who is a soloist in Martha Graham's Company and who scored a personal success in the stage and screen versions of *The King And I,* is completely wasted and is only programmed as a member of the ensemble.

Whoop-Up is a brassy musical whose setting is on or near a United States Indian reservation in Northern Montana. The high-spot of this otherwise routine musical is the "Rocky Mountain Ceremonial", a stunning Indian dance for a men's group that is led by Tony Gardell as the Medicine Man. Choreographed by Onna White, who was responsible for the dances in *The Music Man,* this stirring number uses percussion with the dancers doing intricate steps in and out of giant hoops that require split-second timing and it stops the show at every performance. Elsewhere there is an ensemble number in rather questionable

FLOWER DRUM SONG : *Two scenes from the ballet in the new Rodgers and Hammerstein musical with direction by Gene Kelly and choreography by Carol Haney. Left, Yuriko with one of the Ribuca twins. Right, Ed Kenny and Yuriko in another moment in the ballet.* *Photos : Friedman-Abeles.*

taste where the Indians rope their squaws like steers.

Interestingly enough, since last year's *West Side Story* and *The Music Man,* there has not been an American musical to equal the London production of *Expresso Bongo* in either plot, book, lyrics or music. Thus far, it has been a mediocre season for dance on Broadway, but the future looks brighter. On the way now are *Redhead,* starring Gwen Verdon, with dances by Bob Fosse; *Juno,* starring Shirley Booth, with dances by Agnes de Mille ; *Destry Rides Again,* directed and choreographed by Michael Kidd ; *First Impressions,* a musical version of *Pride and Prejudice,* with dances by Jonathan Lucas ; and *Gypsy,* starring Ethel Merman, with dances by Jerome Robbins.

AWARD TO RUTH ST. DENIS

THE Chapelbrook Foundation of Boston has just honoured Ruth St. Denis with one of the largest grants ever made as an award to an American dancer. This grant is in the sum of four thousand dollars for the year of 1959 and it is given in order that Miss St. Denis may continue her tape recordings on *Dialogues on the Dance,* for the cataloguing of her still pictures and dance films and so that her daily journals may be put into typed manuscript form.

BALLET AT THE MET.

IN the absence of one over-all choreographer at the Metropolitan Opera House this season, the management has invited guest choreographers to devise the dances for specific operas. In the case of *La Gioconda,* Alexandra Danilova was invited to re-stage the Dance of the Hours, and this proved to be an inspired choice. Not only did Danilova use her *premier danseur* and *danseuse* — Scott Douglas and Lupe Serrano brilliantly ; she also made something enchanting of this trite music. As a result, this is the only ballet produced for the Metropolitan Opera this season that won bravos from a purely opera-going audience. Matt Mattox, the Broadway choreographer, restaged *Aida* as far as the dances were concerned and came nowhere near approximating the previous version by Zachary Solov. Mattox's groupings and staging, as a matter of fact, were reminiscent of an old Cecil B. de Mille film. And John Butler failed dismally in providing the necessary wit and elegance in the *Fledermaus* dances.

GENE KELLY ON TV

IN what was described by Alistair Cooke as a "well-disciplined orgy of dancing", Gene Kelly made his television début as a performer-commentator on an hour long "Omnibus" programme that was called "Dancing—A Man's Game". Employing the talents of such diverse figures from the sports world as boxer Sugar Ray Robinson, baseball's Mickey Mantle, tennis star Vic Seixas, basket-ball star Bob Cousy and figure skater Dick Button, Gene Kelly demonstrated the interplay of movement to prove his premise. During the course of the programme, Kelly devoted the major share of it to tracing the origins of tap dance and illustrated the emergence of American musical comedy dance. Ballet was treated but briefly and modern dance ignored entirely save for the fact that "it adds strength and emotional expression" to a new style of American dance. Gene Kelly demonstrated as often as possible himself, so was sometimes short of breath when it came to the commentary. Nevertheless, it was an interesting programme, notably staged and one that may well serve to make dancing more "respectable" for American men.

WHOOP UP *is the name of the new musical in which this Rocky Boy Ceremonial Dance takes place. The choreography is by Onna White. Photo : Friedman-Abeles.*

NEWS IN BRIEF

FREDERIC FRANKLIN has joined the permanent teaching staff of the Washington, D.C., School of the Ballet.

ALVIN AILEY, the young American-Negro dance lead in the Broadway musical, *Jamaica,* has formed an exciting new company whose formance début will be dealt with in our April issue.

CHARLES WEIDMAN made a guest appearance in *Dracula* with Katherine Litz, too late for review in this issue.

HAROLD LANG, formerly of American Ballet Theatre and *Pal Joey* fame, is appearing in an off-Broadway revival of *On the Town,* the musical of 1945 that developed from Jerome Robbins' *Fancy Free.*

THREE SAILORS BACK AGAIN : Joe Bova, Harold Lang and William Hickey in the revival of On The Town (*the musical based on* Fancy Free) *which opened recently at the Carnegie Hall Playhouse, New York.*

EXHIBITION PIECE: *Doris Humphrey, centre, with Charles Weidman, left, and José Limón, right, in a work she created in 1934.*

DORIS HUMPHREY

DORIS HUMPHREY, one of the giants in the field of American modern dance, died in New York on December 29, 1958, after a five month illness. She leaves behind her influences and innovations that are apparent everywhere in the field. Even at the early stage of her career, when she was a soloist with the Denishawn Company, she worked with Ruth St. Denis as co-choreographer in developing "music visualisation". (Interestingly enough, many of the fruits of Doris Humphrey's early experiments have shown up in the field of contemporary ballet where they are being used by noted choreographers in symphonic and abstract works.) Then, too, there was the famous Humphrey-Weidman School and dance theatre that flourished for almost two decades. During this period, Doris Humphrey taught, danced and choreographed a host of dance masterworks. Among these her innovations were enormous: dances without music, dances set to a vocal chorus; works using speech, music and song, those using the spoken word as well as the monumental Bach "Passacaglia in C Minor".

Over a decade ago, when Doris Humphrey prematurely retired from dancing because of an untimely hip affliction, she became Artistic Director of José Limón's Company, starting what was no doubt the richest phase of her career. At the same time, she was director of the dance programmes at the Y.M. & Y.W.H.A., was on the dance faculty at Connecticut College and the Juilliard School of Music, and also organised the Julliard Dance Theatre. In 1949, she was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship to write a book on choreography and, in 1954, she was given the Capezio Award when she was cited "for her creative leadership in modern dance and for the repertory of high distinction with which she has enriched it".

During her last illness she completed her book, "The Art of Making Dances," and it is to be published in America in June by Rinehart and Company. At the moment, a variety of plans are under consideration to commemorate Doris Humphrey fittingly, the chief of which is to have her major works recorded in dance notation for posterity. Perhaps, however, an equally fitting tribute might be the establishment of a Doris Humphrey Foundation in her honour with its major function to be in providing aid to choreographers. **Arthur Todd.**

COVER STORIES

This month's front cover, by Houston Rogers, is of Nadia Nerina and Michael Somes, of the Royal Ballet, in Michael Fokine's The Firebird.

NERINA was born in Cape Town in 1927. At an early age she studied with Hazel Grinter and Joyce Smerdon, later with Mary Skeaping. She won many awards in South Africa and toured the Union. In 1946 she came to England and entered the Royal Ballet School. In the same year she joined the Sadler's Wells Ballet Theatre in which company she took over many principal rôles. One year later she was moved to the company at Covent Garden and was promoted to ballerina status in 1952. In addition to her work with the Royal Ballet she has made two South African concert tours with her fellow countryman, Alexis Rassine, in addition to concert performances in Great Britain and Europe.

SOMES is the subject of our "Accent on the Male" feature this month. Details of his career will be found on pages 16 and 17.

Ballet Dates

THE ROYAL BALLET I

at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

February

18 *Mam'zelle Angot, La Fête Etrange, Petrushka*
19 *Coppélia* (Linden, Blair)
21 **(M)** *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, Ashbridge)
24 *Mam'zelle Angot, La Fête Etrange, Petrushka*
25 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, Ashbridge
27 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Linden, Blair)
28 *Coppélia* (Park, Burne)

March

2 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Grey)
3 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Nerina, Blair)
4 *Mam'zelle Angot, La Fête Etrange, Checkmate*
5 *La Fête Etrange, Harlequin in April* (1st perf.), *Mam'zelle Angot*
6 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Beriosova, Ashbridge)
7 **(M)** *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Grey)
7 **(E)** *La Fête Etrange, Harlequin in April, Mam'zelle Angot*
9 *Les Patineurs, Giselle* (Linden, Blair)
10 GALA PERFORMANCE
11 *Les Patineurs, Giselle* (Beriosova, Ashbridge)
12 *Le Lac des Cygnes* (Grey)
13 *La Fête Etrange, Danses Concertantes* (1st perf.), *Petrushka*
14 **(M)** *La Fête Etrange, Danses Concertantes, Petrushka*
14 **(E)** *La Fête Etrange, Danses Concertantes, Checkmate*

LONDON'S FESTIVAL BALLET

February

16 The Hippodrome, Golder's Green
23 The Davis Theatre, Croydon

March

2 The Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon
9 The Empire Theatre, Liverpool
16 The Empire Theatre, Sunderland

BALLET RAMBERT

February

16 The Little Theatre, Middlesbrough
23 Her Majesty's Theatre, Carlisle

March

2 The Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton
9 The New Theatre, Hull
16 The Alhambra Theatre, Bradford
30 The Theatre Royal, Exeter

April

6 The Theatre Royal, Bath
13 The Opera House, Cheltenham
20 The Opera House, Jersey
27 The White Rock Pavilion, Hastings

May

25 The Sadler's Wells Theatre, London (2 weeks)

June

8 The Essoldo Theatre, Brighton

July

15 Jacob's Pillow, Mass., U.S.A. (3 weeks)

TAMARA TOUMANOVA

with Vladimir Ouhktomsky

at the Sadler's Wells Theatre, London, on April 13 for 4 weeks.

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Provincial Tour

May

15 The New Theatre, Oxford
25 The Hippodrome, Birmingham

June

1 The Palace Theatre, Manchester (2 weeks)

LUDMILLA TCHERINA'S BALLET COMPANY

at the Cambridge Theatre, London, March 19 (confirm with daily press for full details).

PILAR LOPEZ AND HER BALLET ESPANOL

at Princes Theatre, London, May 12 (confirm with daily press for full details).

INTERNATIONAL DANCE FESTIVALS

The following have already announced that there will be ballet in their festivals. Details to be published when available.

WIESBADEN: May 7-June 7
BORDEAUX: May 19-June 3 (London's Festival Ballet).
VIENNA: May 30-June 21.
COPENHAGEN: 10th Danish Ballet Festival. May 18-31.
Repertoire: *La Sylphide, Coppélia, Romeo and Juliet, Apollon Musagète, Harlequinade, Miss Julie, Giselle, Etudes, The Moon Reindeer*
STOCKHOLM: May 31-June 14.
BATH: June 3-13. Dancers of the Royal Swedish Ballet.
HOLLAND FESTIVAL: June 15-July 15.
GRANADA: June 20-July 2.
DUBROVNIK: July 1-August 31.
GENOA (Nervi): July 15-August 3
SANTANDER: July 25-August 31.
ATHENS: August-September
BESANCON: September 3-13.
BERLIN: September 20-October 6.

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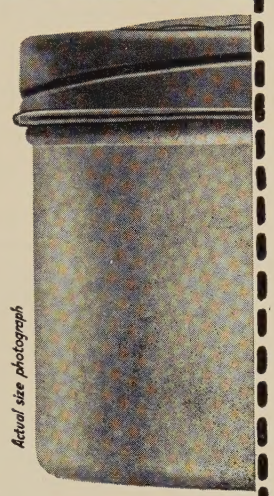

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